

CHALMERS

Decision by: President	Type of policy document: Rules of Procedure	Registration number: C 2025-0314
Date of decision: 2025-03-31	Case manager: Frida Jedvert	
Document applies from 2025-03-31	Division/corresponding entity responsible for creation/revision of document: Office of the president	
Document applies until Until further notice	The document replaces previous decision: C 2023-1605 Appointment regulation for doctoral programmes	

Rules of procedure for doctoral programme

Policy document at Chalmers tekniska högskola 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.

Rules of procedure 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. Rules of procedure are intended to specify rules on the same overarching level. Rules of procedure are adopted by the President of Chalmers. Additional policy documents are used in addition to the rules of procedure 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.

The official language of communication at Chalmers is Swedish. English versions of policy documents are to be seen as translations. In the event of differences between the official Swedish version of a policy document and the translation, the Swedish version takes precedence.

1.	General regulations	4
1.1	Definitions.....	4
1.2	Responsibility and management.....	4
1.3	Degrees	4
1.4	Graduate schools and doctoral study subjects	5
1.5	General syllabus	5
1.6	Director of Studies	5
2	Access to courses and study programmes	6
2.1	General regulations.....	6
2.2	Advertisement of vacancies	6
2.3	Admission requirements and selection.....	6
2.4	Admission.....	7
3	Study funding for doctoral students.....	7
3.1	General regulations.....	7
3.2	Employment as doctoral student.....	7
3.2.1	Departmental duties.....	8
3.3	Industrial doctoral student and other employment outside higher education	8
3.4	Employment within another higher education	9
3.5	Doctoral students admitted to a foreign higher education institution (Double Doctoral Degree).....	9
3.6	Visiting doctoral students	9
4	Programmes	9
4.1	Scope.....	9
4.2	Individual study plan and study follow-up	9
4.3	Licentiate and doctoral thesis	10
4.4	Courses and other elements	10
4.5	Transfer of credits	11
4.6	Internationalisation.....	11
4.7	Teaching skills	11
4.8	Withdrawing from a doctoral programme.....	11
5	Supervision	11
5.1	General regulations.....	11
5.2	Supervisor	11
5.3	Change of supervisor	12
6	Examiner (doctoral student examiner).....	13
7	Licentiate and half-way seminar.....	13
7.1	General regulations for the seminars	13
7.1.1	Hybrid seminar	14

7.2	Application, decision regarding seminar and dissemination of information	14
7.2.1	Half-way seminar	14
7.2.2	Licentiate seminar	14
7.3	Licentiate degree and licentiate level	14
8	Doctoral thesis defence.....	14
8.1	General regulations.....	14
8.1.1	Hybrid defense.....	15
8.2	Application, decision on defence and dissemination of information	15
8.3	Thesis preview.....	15
8.4	Opponent, chair of the defence and grading committee	15
8.5	Grading committee's decision on grade	16
9	Withdrawal of resources for doctoral students	16
9.1	Situations where supervision and other resources may be withdrawn.....	16
9.2	Significance of withdrawal of supervision and other resources	17
9.3	Impact on doctoral employment and other financial support upon withdrawal of resources.....	17
9.4	Right to a representative, interpreter, and consideration of conflict of interest	17
9.5	Measures required before withdrawal of resources is applicable.....	18
9.6	Measures if withdrawal of resources are relevant	18
9.7	Request of withdrawal of supervision and other resources	19
9.8	Investigation of the request.....	19
9.9	Decision and appeal	20
10	Doctoral student influence.....	20
10.1	Compulsory student union membership	20
11	Working environment and study environment.....	21
11.1	Doctoral student representative.....	21
12	Quality assurance	21
13	Handling of conflicts-of-interest issues	21
13.1	Overarching principles	21
13.2	Principles for decisions and the exercise of official authority.....	22
13.3	Possibility for Exemptions	22
13.4	Handling of conflict-of-interest issues in matters related to doctoral defenses.....	22
14	Reconsideration, complaint and appeal.....	22
15	Disciplinary measures.....	23
16	Report of deviation from the rules of procedure.....	23

1. General regulations

1.1 Definitions

In these rules of procedure, the term doctoral student refers to a student who has been accepted to and is studying in a doctoral programme at Chalmers.

In these rules of procedure, 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 these rules of procedure, the term Vice head of Department refers to 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 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 Vice 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 Third Cycle 1.1*.

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 Vice 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:

- The name of the subject and any specialisations
- The prerequisite knowledge requirements and other conditions that apply for admission to the programme
- The main content of the programme
- Examination requirements
- The scope of the doctoral thesis in higher education credits
- The scope of compulsory and elective courses in higher education credits
- When the general syllabus or a change to this will go into effect
- 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 the Head of Department and reports to the Vice 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.

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

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 these rules of procedure 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, i.e. a master's degree (mastersexamen) of 120 credits or a master's degree (magisterexamen) of 60 credits. 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, for example a 4-year bachelor's degree is accepted.

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.

The minimum language requirement is English B/6 (in the Swedish upper secondary school). This can be met in different ways, for example through a number of internationally recognized tests in English. More information on how the requirement can be met, which tests and results are

considered to correspond to the required level, please see information provided by [University Admissions in Sweden](#).

Applicants who do not meet the admission requirements may be admitted according to a special admission procedure. When this is applied, the Vice 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 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, the target degree 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 Vice 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.

Doctoral studies at Chalmers require physical presence during the study period. If the admitted student needs a residence permit to stay in Sweden and conduct their studies, the university reserves the right to revoke the admission decision if the student cannot present a valid residence permit required for the studies by the official start date.

If a residence permit cannot be presented by the start date, and the university assesses that the student can begin their studies at a later date, the university may allow that the residence permit to be presented latest by that date instead.

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 employment within another 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 for employment.

Doctoral student salaries are regulated in a special agreement.

3.2.1 Departmental duties

A person employed as a doctoral student shall primarily devote themselves to their own education as defined in their individual study plan. The employment period for full-time doctoral studies corresponds to four years. The employment may also include other duties that is referred to as departmental duties. These duties may correspond to a maximum of 20 percent of a full-time position and the doctoral student's employment shall be extended corresponding to the scope of departmental duties. For example, if 20 percent departmental duties are completed during the entire employment, the total employment period is extended to five years.

Institutional employment shall primarily refer to teaching within Chalmers' education, but other tasks within research, technical development, or administration may be included if they contribute to the doctoral student's development into an independent researcher working in academia or industry. All work within department duties shall be calculated in scope and allocated the required time to the doctoral student and be included in the total framework of no more than 20 percent of a full-time position. In addition to departmental duties, other work at the department may occur that employees are expected to participate in as part of their employment.

Development of pedagogical and communicative skills is an important part of doctoral studies. All doctoral students accepted at Chalmers are therefore expected to participate in teaching primarily within the undergraduate education based on the doctoral student's specific needs and skills.

Chalmers shall provide pedagogical training and support before the doctoral student's teaching effort begins. In addition, pedagogical training according to the standard that applies at Chalmers shall normally be offered to doctoral students within one calendar year of the start of the studies.

The scope and content of the departmental duties shall be decided by the line management and specified in the individual study plan. Consideration shall be given to achieving the degree within the agreed time.

3.3 Industrial doctoral student and other employment outside higher education

The term industrial doctoral student refers to a person who has been admitted to doctoral programme at Chalmers and conducts doctoral studies within their employment at an external organisation. Organisation refers to a company, institute, authority, or other organisation.

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. The recommendation is 80 percent of a full-time position, the minimum is 50 percent.

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 Employment within another higher education

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

In order for funding within the framework of employment within another 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. The recommendation is 80 percent of a full-time position, the minimum is 50 percent.

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

Admission of a doctoral student with employment within another higher education requires a written agreement between the funding employer and the admitting department in accordance with the central agreement template.

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. A first follow-up meeting shall be held within the first six months of the doctoral student being admitted. Thereafter, at least one follow-up meeting shall be held each 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. Together these roles constitute the "follow-up group".

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 Vice 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 Vice 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 withdrawal from 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 Vice Head of Department shall appoint one principal supervisor and one or more assistant supervisors in connection with admission.

The principal supervisor shall have a tenured appointment at Chalmers as associate professor, professor, full professor, or research professor, or be “oavlönad docent” with tenured appointment at Chalmers as lecturer, researcher, or senior researcher.² The Vice 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.

A doctoral student at a university without the authority to award doctoral degree 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 Vice 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 at Chalmers with employment at an external organisation 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 of high quality during the doctoral studies, and for ensuring that the doctoral student receives qualified supervision by one of their supervisors in a scope sufficient 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 supervision’s scope, form or quality that have been pointed out. The request for change of supervisor shall be made in writing to the Vice Head of Department.

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 investigated and made by the Vice Head of Department after consultation with the director studies. The Vice 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 Vice Head of Department’s decision shall be issued in writing with the grounds stated.

The Vice 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.

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

6 Examiner (doctoral student examiner)

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

For each doctoral student, the Vice Head of Department shall, in dialogue with the principal supervisor, 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 Vice 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 doctoral study subject and shall ensure that the education within that doctoral programme maintains high quality for each doctoral student. The examiner is particularly responsible for ensuring that the doctoral student's education enables 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 approves that a doctoral dissertation can be submitted for preview (see 8.3). 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 and half-way seminar

7.1 General regulations for the seminars

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

For doctoral students who are studying full-time and are considered able to proceed towards a doctoral degree, the seminar is expected to be held after 2 years of study. If the doctoral student's study rate is 80 percent with departmental duties or other of 20 percent, the seminar is expected to be held after 2.5 years of study. In the event of expected significant delays (six months or more, considering the study rate and valid leave), the reasons for this must be discussed with the follow-up group at the annual follow-up meeting (if necessary, the follow-up meeting must be brought forward) and approved by the vice-department head. The discussion must be documented in an appropriate manner in the individual study plan together with a timetable for the remaining work to achieve licentiate level.

For the seminar, a discussion leader shall be appointed by the Vice Head of Department in dialogue with the supervisor and examiner. The seminar is chaired by a chairperson. The doctoral student's supervisor shall not be the chairperson.

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

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

Suitable documentation for the seminar shall be provided so that the doctoral student's examiner can assess whether the licentiate expertise has been achieved.

7.1.1 Hybrid seminar

Normally, the seminar should be conducted with a discussion leader and chairperson on site. In the case of a hybrid seminar (digital meeting), a person should be appointed to be responsible for technology and the digital handling of the seminar. This person should not have any other role during the seminar. If the technology is not working satisfactorily, the seminar should be canceled until it has been fixed.

It should be possible to follow the seminar digitally, but attendees must be present in the room to ensure that they can take part in the entire seminar and ask questions.

7.2 Application, decision regarding seminar and dissemination of information

No later than six weeks before the planned date for the Licentiate seminar, the doctoral student shall apply to the Vice Head of Department of their desire to hold a seminar. For half-way seminar the application shall be made no later than four weeks before the planned date. The Vice Head of Department determines the time and place for the seminar, following a proposal from the doctoral student. The seminar must be announced at least three weeks in advance.

7.2.1 Half-way seminar

Prior to the seminar, documentation is prepared. The basis for the half-way seminar is adapted locally.

7.2.2 Licentiate seminar

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

7.3 Licentiate degree and licentiate level

At the half-way seminar, the examiner assesses whether the licentiate expertise has been achieved and then decides whether the mid-term seminar has been passed or failed. At the licentiate seminar, the examiner assesses the licentiate thesis and its presentation with one of the grades Pass or Fail. If the thesis and/or its presentation is graded fail, it must be justified in writing.

For a licentiate degree, all the requirements for a licentiate degree must be met. After the half-way seminar, the examiner assesses whether the licentiate expertise has been achieved. In order for the licentiate level to be considered achieved, all the requirements for a licentiate degree, with the exception of the licentiate thesis, must be met. For a specification of the requirements for a licentiate degree, see *Local Qualifications Framework for Chalmers University of Technology - Third Cycle*. When the licentiate degree has been completed or the licentiate level has been achieved, the doctoral student reaches the next pay grade. The examiner decides whether all components of the licentiate degree have been passed or the licentiate level has been achieved.

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 Vice Head of Department can decide to hold the defence at another time or location.

8.1.1 Hybrid defense

Normally, a defense should be conducted with the respondent, opponent and the defense chair on site. The grading committee should be on site but can participate digitally. In the case of a hybrid defense (digital meeting), a person should be appointed to be responsible for technology and the digital handling of the defense. This person should not have any other role during the defense. If the technology is not functioning satisfactorily, the defense should be interrupted until it has been remedied.

It should be possible to follow the defense digitally, but the audience must be present in the room to be guaranteed to be able to take part in the entire defense and ask questions.

If the entire grading committee is not physically present, its chair signs the minutes, electronically or physically, and the other grading committee members confirm via email that they give the chair a mandate to sign the grading committee's decision. The minutes and any e-mail messages are recorded together.

8.2 Application, decision on defence and dissemination of information

The doctoral student must, no later than four months before the planned date for the public defense, apply to the vice-prefect, who will decide whether to grant or reject the application.

The Vice Head of Department determines 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.

The doctoral student is responsible for ensuring that copies of the doctoral thesis are available for three weeks prior to the defence 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 supervisor shall 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 shall 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 Vice 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 accordance with section 13 Handling of conflict-of-interest issues.

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 Vice 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 Vice 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 Vice Head of Department.

9 Withdrawal of resources for doctoral students

Decisions to withdraw supervision and other resources may not be delegated. Supervision and other resources may not be withdrawn for the period during which the doctoral student is employed as a doctoral student. Therefore, the issue of withdrawal needs to be raised well in advance before the current employment is to be extended. If the doctoral student's appointment is expected to expire before the matter is resolved, an extension of the employment shall be made, where applicable, corresponding to the estimated remaining processing time.

9.1 Situations where supervision and other resources may be withdrawn

If a doctoral student significantly neglects their commitments according to the individual study plan or is otherwise not considered to have the ability or prerequisites to continue to the degree, the Head of Department may decide that the doctoral student shall no longer have the right to supervision and other resources for the doctoral education. Such cases may, for example, be if the doctoral student, despite access to adequate supervision and other necessary resources for the planned studies, does not demonstrate the ability to complete their education in a reasonable manner within the specified time.

When assessing whether resources should be withdrawn, it should also be taken into account whether Chalmers has fulfilled its commitments according to the individual study plan. Thus, the supervisors, together with the examiner and director of studies (the follow-up group), vice-dean, manager and HR partner, should have tried on several occasions and in various ways to enable the doctoral student to pursue their studies according to the individual study plan, for example through revisions to the individual study plan, extra supervision support or a change of supervisor.

Withdrawing resources for a doctoral student should be a last resort when all other possible solutions have been exhausted.

The individual study plan is the most important document for the doctoral student's individual research education. For a decision to withdraw resources to be made, the documentation of progression and implemented support measures needs to be adequate. It is therefore important to have a clear and detailed individual study plan that is followed up regularly.

9.2 Significance of withdrawal of supervision and other resources

A decision to withdraw resources for a doctoral student means, among other things, that supervisor resources, workplace, computer, telephone and e-mail address, access to laboratory premises and equipment, and access to other teaching resources are withdrawn.

A doctoral student whose resources are withdrawn retains their admission to doctoral education at Chalmers and has the right to apply to defend their doctoral thesis at a defense or present their licentiate thesis at a licentiate seminar. The doctoral student needs to notify withdrawal from their studies or notify an interruption of doctoral education if so desired, for example to be able to make themselves available to the labour market.

9.3 Impact on doctoral employment and other financial support upon withdrawal of resources

Resources may not be withdrawn during the time period the doctoral student has doctoral employment. 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 first employment period for a doctoral student lasts one year. After this, employment is extended by maximum two years at a time. Thus, the department needs to take the doctoral student's employment conditions into account when starting the process to determine whether the doctoral student's resources should be withdrawn.

If the doctoral student has doctoral employment and an investigation into the withdrawal of resources has been initiated, the doctoral employment should be extended up until the time that the matter regarding withdrawal of the doctoral student's resources has been decided. However, the employment does not have to be extended if the doctoral student's study time has reached the maximum limit of four years (taking any periods of statutory leave and department duties into account).

If a doctoral student is employed by an employer other than Chalmers, the employer must be informed of the situation and the decision.

9.4 Right to a representative, interpreter, and consideration of conflict of interest

A doctoral student has the right to appoint a representative. The representative has the right to plead the doctoral student's case, the right to attend meetings, etc as support. At Chalmers, there is a doctoral student representative (Doktorandombud, DOMB) employed by the Chalmers Student Guild.

A doctoral student whose resources may be withdrawn can seek support from a representative as above. Doctoral students who are union members also can also contact their respective union for representative support.

If the case involves a doctoral student who does not have good command of the Swedish language, written documentation and statements must be translated into English upon request. An interpreter shall be hired if necessary.

As in all case management, conflict of interest must be taken into consideration when handling cases concerning the withdrawal of doctoral student resources.

9.5 Measures required before withdrawal of resources is applicable

If problems arise during the doctoral studies – for example, if the doctoral student significantly neglects their commitments or if their ability and prerequisites to complete the education are questioned – the main supervisor, together with the assistant supervisor and examiner, must raise this with the doctoral student at an early stage and inform the director of studies and the Vice Head of Department of the situation that has arisen.

The director of studies, with the support of the Vice Head of Department, is responsible for clearly explaining the intention of frequent follow-up meetings and the consequences of failure to progress for the doctoral student. The director of studies must also inform the doctoral student of the right to have a representative present at meetings (see section 9.4).

To ensure structured follow-up, the director of studies must bring forward the next follow-up meeting. In these cases, it is crucial that follow-up meetings take place at shorter intervals and that clear agreements on goals, requirements and results of these are always documented in the ISP at each follow-up. Further meetings and revisions of the ISP may be needed for structured follow-up.

The director of studies is responsible for ensuring that the following agreements are clearly documented in the individual study plan (ISP): a) goals and requirements, b) support measures to achieve the goals and requirements, c) deadlines for when the goals and requirements must be met, d) date for the next follow-up, and e) outcome of the follow-up. The director of studies calls follow-up meetings and is responsible, together with the follow-up group, for following up on the decided measures (a-e above).

At follow-up meetings, decisions can be made on various measures, such as revising the individual study plan (ISP), developing detailed action plans for the doctoral student and supervisor, increasing supervision support or, if necessary, a recommendation to change supervisor. A revised ISP should include a concrete timetable for the remaining period of study and specify the content of the education during this period. It should also be clear what commitments the different supervisors have and what resources and support measures are available for the doctoral student. The aim is to ensure structured and clear planning that creates the best possible conditions for the doctoral student's continued education.

9.6 Measures if withdrawal of resources are relevant

If, after the above process with extensive attempts and measures, the follow-up group still questions the doctoral student's ability and prerequisites to complete the education, the Vice Head of Department shall call a meeting with the doctoral student, supervisor, examiner, director of studies, manager and HR partner to discuss whether the situation justifies a withdrawal of resources.

The Vice Head of Department is responsible for informing the doctoral student about the content of the meeting, the meaning of the process and the doctoral student's right to be accompanied by a representative (see section 9.4). The Vice Head of Department is also responsible for ensuring that the meeting is documented and that the notes are signed and distributed to all participants.

If the follow-up group assesses after this meeting that the doctoral student is not able to benefit from the education, the main supervisor must send a request of withdrawal of resources to the Head of Department.

9.7 Request of withdrawal of supervision and other resources

The request shall be addressed to the Head of Department and must include an account of:

- In what way the doctoral student has substantially neglected their commitments, or on what grounds they are deemed to lack the ability or prerequisites to continue toward the degree, and
- how Chalmers has fulfilled its commitments according to the individual study plan.

The following documents must be appended to the report:

- All versions of the doctoral student's individual study plan
- Dated documentation from meetings from the preceding headings
- Any relevant documentation, such as email exchanges
- The supervisors' joint assessment of the doctoral student's current results and their ability to fulfil their undertakings as specified in the individual study plan
- The examiner's assessment of the doctoral student's current results and their ability to fulfil their undertakings as specified in the individual study plan
- The Director of Studies' description of the measures implemented to enable the doctoral student's studies
- The HR partner's account of the measures that have been taken from a work environment/employer perspective.

9.8 Investigation of the request

As soon as the Head of Department has received a request of withdrawal of supervision and other resources, the Head of Department must ensure that the doctoral student is informed that a report has been submitted, and the significance of the process. The doctoral student and the doctoral student representative shall be given the opportunity to submit a written statement in response to the report within three weeks.

The Head of Department shall have the request investigated, taking any statements from the doctoral student or doctoral student representative into account. If the doctoral student's employment is expected to expire before the case has been decided the employment, where applicable, shall be extended for an amount of time equivalent to the estimated amount of time required to reach a decision on the matter.

The Head of Department shall convene a meeting with the doctoral student, supervisor(s), Director of Studies, examiner, Vice Head of Department, HR partner, manager, doctoral student representative and (if the doctoral student is a member of a union) the local union representative. If the doctoral student's manager also serves as the doctoral student's supervisor, the next manager in line shall be summoned to the meeting. The Head of Department is responsible for ensuring that the doctoral student is informed of the content of the meeting and the significance of the process before the meeting takes place. After the meeting, the Head of Department shall decide whether resources should be withdrawn.

As part of the assessment, the Head of Department shall consider whether Chalmers has fulfilled its commitments as specified in rules of procedure for doctoral programmes and the individual study plan. Such commitments may, for example, be making necessary resources available for the

implementation of the doctoral student's research project and supervisor(s) having tried in different ways and on multiple occasions to induce the doctoral student to conduct their studies as specified in the individual study plan.

9.9 Decision and appeal

The Head of Department's decision shall be issued in writing with the grounds stated. Documents submitted with the report and received during the Head of Department's investigation, including the written statements from the doctoral student and doctoral student representative, shall be appended to the decision.

For a doctoral student with doctoral employment, the decision to withdraw the right to supervision and other resources means that the student will not be offered an extension of their doctoral employment. The doctoral student shall receive the decision about withdrawal of resources no later than one month before the current employment period expires.

For a doctoral student with other study funding, the decision goes into effect from the time point specified in the decision. With employment in external organisation, such as for an industrial doctoral student, the time point should be decided in consultation with the external organisation in accordance with agreement.

A decision to withdraw resources for a doctoral student that go against the doctoral student may be appealed by the latter to the Vice President. The doctoral student has the right to support from a representative (see section 9.4) in the appeal. The appeal must be made in writing and must reach the university's registrar (registrator@chalmers.se) no later than three weeks from the date of notification of the decision.

If the decision is appealed to the Vice President and the doctoral student's contract is expected to expire before the matter is settled, employment shall be extended for a period of time equal to the estimated remaining processing time.

The Vice President's decision, which is final, shall be issued in writing with the grounds stated and cannot be appealed.

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. This also includes doctoral students with employment at external organisations in accordance with sections 3.3-3.5. Certificates, diplomas, etc. shall not be issued to the student until the dues have been paid.

11 Working environment and study environment

During their doctoral education, the doctoral student has a dual role – as a student and as an employee. As an employee, the doctoral student is subject to the same laws and regulations as other employees, which makes a thorough introduction crucial. The doctoral student should therefore be given a clear overview of the systems, laws and regulations that apply, and encouraged to communicate any needs or special considerations that need to be taken into account to create good conditions for their studies.

The manager is responsible for ensuring that the doctoral student understands the complexity that the dual role entails, clarifying the expectations, rights and obligations that apply, and for following up and addressing any adaptation needs that can support the doctoral student's study results.

The doctoral student's main supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the doctoral student has good conditions to complete their doctoral education in accordance with the structures and processes of the graduate school.

11.1 Doctoral student representative

At Chalmers, there is a doctoral student representative (Doktorombud, DOMB) whose task is to help doctoral students with any problems they may have in relation to their studies. The doctoral student representative is employed directly by the Chalmers Student Union and is therefore unaffiliated, non-political and neutral. Matters handled by the doctoral student representative are kept confidential, with the exception of the risk of serious harm to the doctoral student or others.

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. During 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 Handling of conflicts-of-interest issues

A conflict of interest arises when a person participating in the handling of a matter may be influenced by personal relationships, previous collaboration or other conflicts of interest that may call into question their impartiality. The following rules and principles shall apply throughout the doctoral education, especially in connection with public defences. Roles where a conflict of interest may arise include, for example, doctoral student, main supervisor, assistant supervisor, examiner, director of studies, vice-dean, manager, opponent, members of the examination board and deputy. At licentiate seminars and mid-seminars, the examiner assesses and approves the work of the doctoral student, whereby the role of the discussion leader does not entail the same risk of conflict-of-interest situations.

13.1 Overarching principles

- Objectivity, objectivity and impartiality: All education and administration within doctoral education shall be characterised by these values.

- Public trust: To maintain trust in the integrity of the operation, special attention shall be paid to situations where personal relationships may affect the administration, for example if the examiner, supervisor and doctoral student – or members of the same supervisor or reference group – have a close private relationship.
- Relationships between key persons: A close private relationship may not exist between the examiner, supervisor and doctoral student. In addition, similar relationships should be avoided between supervisors within the same group.
- Documentation of unavoidable relationships: If a close private relationship cannot be avoided, this shall be noted in the individual study plan with a specific justification.

13.2 Principles for decisions and the exercise of official authority

- At the public defense and other decision-making situations, possible grounds for conflict of interest must be carefully considered.
- Scientific collaboration between the opponent or member of the examination board and the examiner, supervisor (both main and assistant) or the doctoral student must not have occurred during the past five years. Examples of such collaboration may include joint research projects, funding or publications.
- In good time before a public defense, the opponent and member of the examination board are obliged to report any conflict of interest or close personal relationship in connection with the doctoral student, examiner and/or supervisor.

13.3 Possibility for Exemptions

In exceptional cases, deviations from these principles may be justified. Examples of such cases include:

- When research projects or publications involve a large proportion of the relevant research community.
- When the relevant research community is small, and it is therefore difficult to avoid all forms of collaboration.

13.4 Handling of conflict-of-interest issues in matters related to doctoral defenses

The department is responsible for monitoring the issue of conflict of interest. Prior to a doctoral defense, the principal supervisor must be informed of the regulatory principles for conflict of interest. When the doctoral student applies for a public defense, the principal supervisor must justify whether the proposal for an opponent and examination board involves a departure from the established principles.

Each department must design clear administrative procedures for how conflict-of-interest issues are monitored and handled. All documentation relating to the handling of conflict of interest must be archived according to established procedures and handled in accordance with applicable archiving regulations.

14 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 of resources for doctoral students
- 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.

15 Disciplinary measures

If cheating or plagiarism is suspected during the examination of courses that the doctoral student is taking in their doctoral education, the matter may be reported to the Chalmers Disciplinary Board. Since the doctoral student is an employee and a student, the doctoral student is covered by the Disciplinary Statute for Students at Chalmers University of Technology AB (C 2018-1825).

16 Report of deviation from the rules of procedure

Any complaints of deviations from these rules of procedure 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.