

Programme

1. The focus of the Special Doctoral Programme in Language and Linguistics

This special doctoral programme invites doctoral students from all language areas within the Faculty of Humanities. Its focus is on basic linguistic research, above all language as system, preferably from a cross-linguistic or diachronic perspective. This implies that the research questions of the thesis must have a firm anchoring within the traditional areas of grammar (morphology and syntax), phonology, semantics and pragmatics.

There are several reasons why a doctoral programme of this kind should have a well-defined focus. One reason is that it simplifies supervision and creates conditions for good group cohesion because all participants will have common interests. Of course, among the doctoral students there will be those with comparative linguistic focus, particular language focus, and language didactic focus. What unifies them is that they use similar methods and thematic research questions concerning the language or languages on which they focus.

In addition, the courses provided by the programme will be focused and relevant. Because the number of courses given within this special doctoral programme is limited, it is important that the doctoral students feel that the courses are relevant for their dissertation work.

2. Aims

The central aim of the Special Doctoral Programme in Language and Linguistics is to offer doctoral students from all areas of language study a qualified research education programme which will lead to a dissertation with focus on the systematic and structural aspects of language, that is, with focus on the traditional core areas of phonology, morphology, syntax as well as semantics and pragmatics. Dissertations should be based on empirical material which be based on one or several languages, but should preferably have a cross-linguistic or diachronic perspective.

A vital part of the programme for all participants will be special courses intended to provide both extensive knowledge of the central areas of linguistics and a solid basis for dissertation work. Collective seminars and supervision across departmental boundaries will also contribute to participants acquiring a solid understanding of the nature and diversity of human language.



3. Organization

The Special Doctoral Programme in Language and Linguistics is organized by the Faculty of Humanities at Stockholm University. A steering committee consisting of representatives of relevant linguistic subject areas have overall responsibility for the programme. The daily activities of the programme will be coordinated by the director, the vice director and the research administrator.

4. Eligibility

To be eligible for acceptance to this special doctoral programme one must fulfill both the basic acceptance requirements for graduate studies as well as the specific acceptance requirements. The basic acceptance requirements stipulate that the candidate have an advanced degree (Masters or Magister) and completed at least 240 university credits (or equivalent to Swedish university credits), of which 60 credits must be at the advanced (Masters) level, or in some other way have acquired the equivalent, either inside or outside of Sweden. The specific acceptance requirements are (1) completion of a Magister degree (or equivalent) in the intended subject area and (2) relevance to the focus area of the special doctoral programme.

Candidates must be able to attest that they fulfill both the basic and the specific acceptance requirements to the graduate programme of one of the following subjects: Ancient Greek, Arabic, the languages and cultures of Asia (Chinese, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Central Asian Studies), the Baltic languages, bilingualism, comparative linguistics, computational linguistics, English, Finnish, French, German, Italian, language development, Latin, pedagogy of language, Portuguese, Scandinavian languages, sign language, Slavic languages, and Spanish.

Candidates who have already completed a Ph.D., or who have started a doctoral programme, will not be accepted to the Special Doctoral Programme in Language and Linguistics.

5. Language

The language used in all the courses in the special doctoral programme, as well as course materials, lectures, seminars and assignments, will be English. Consequently, all applicants must show evidence of good knowledge of written and spoken academic English.



Applicants who do not have English as their mother tongue or do not have a university degree from a Scandinavian university or from a university where English is the majority language, must provide evidence that they have reached at least one of the following proficiency examinations levels:

- IELTS 7.0 (with at least 6.0 in each section)
- Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English, with at least grade B
- Cambridge Certificate of Advanced English grade A
- TOEFL 600 (with 55 in each section and 4.0 on the Test of Written English)
- TOEFL 250 in data-based test (with 21 in each section)
- TOEFL Internet-based TOEFL English Test 100 (with at least 20 in each section)

Knowledge of Swedish is not required for acceptance, but doctoral students without knowledge of Swedish are expected to learn basic Swedish early in their doctoral studies in order to be able to take part in Swedish based research, lectures, and seminars. The languages used by the various departments and the language of the dissertation are decided by the individual hosting departments.

6. Selection and Acceptance

The selection procedure will take place in two stages. First, following initial sorting, the applications will be distributed to the relevant departments, who will evaluate eligibility and rank the application based on criteria discussed below as well as on relevance to the focus of the programme. It is important that departments motivate their rankings. In the second stage the programme's steering committee will evaluate applications from the departments involved. These evaluations by the steering committee will be based on the rankings done by the departments as well as on qualitative criteria, such as previous studies which have particular relevance to the focus of the programme. Consideration will be given to the distribution of doctoral student posts among departments.

An important criterion for selection is the extent to which an applicant is judged to have the ability to profit from the doctoral programme. Selection is further based on the applicant's results of previous studies, the dissertation plan, and other merits, such as working experience and publications. Interviews with short-listed applicants will precede the final decisions of the steering committee concerning selection.

The faculty guidelines concerning acceptance and financing will be adhered to selection criteria (pdf)



7. Financing

Doctoral students in the special doctoral programme will be financed via doctoral student posts (employment). The salary level will follow the various stages prescribed by Stockholm University. The doctoral student posts comprise four years of fulltime studies and can be occupied for a maximum of five years (if 20% of the time is given to department service). A financial plan and a study plan for the entire four-year period will be set up following acceptance. Against the background of these plans, the doctoral students' results will be evaluated on a yearly basis.

8. Department Service

The first year should not contain any department service. Eventual department service during the last three years should be concentrated to limited periods. Although department service certainly has benefits for the individual doctoral student (e.g. extended employment and pedagogical merit) as well as the department, it can also lead to undesirable consequences in that doctoral students often put more time into preparing teaching than what would correspond to an employment extension. The negative consequences are especially serious for doctoral students within the special doctoral programme because these students are expected to progress at roughly the same pace, especially during the first year of obligatory courses.

9. Instruction Content and Layout

Instruction will comprise both a course part and a dissertation part. The focus of the special doctoral programme will be visible in several obligatory courses which will cover the core areas, i.e. grammar, semantics, phonology, pragmatics, typology and diachrony, giving a total of 30 university credits. The scope and focus of the remaining courses will depend on the requirements of the graduate programmes in the individual departments.

The courses will be run early in the programme and follow a fixed common schedule for all doctoral students. Instructors will be recruited both from Stockholm University and from other universities. For instructors coming from the outside, input will primarily be limited to particular course components. The courses will be open for other doctoral students within the faculty, particularly those who want credits for the course.

In addition to the programme's courses, there will be common activities throughout the doctoral studies period. These will include seminars and retreats where the doctoral students can present their thesis work and instructors and guests present their research. There will also be tutorials which will be devoted to discussion of the roll of research and to acquiring academic proficiency such as oral presentation techniques and writing abstracts, research proposals, etc.



The seminars will be a vital part of the continuity of interaction between doctoral students and instructors, especially when the obligatory courses are finished.

The topic, the language, and the format of the thesis are questions that will be decided in discussion of the steering committee, the primary supervisor, and the doctoral student.

10. Supervision

The primary and the secondary supervisors will be appointed by the steering committee in consultation with the relevant departments. A doctoral student may wish to change supervisor and it is the programme's steering committee that will adjudicate such changes. For other issues the rules concerning supervision laid down by the relevant department or research area apply.

11. Disputation

The steering committee will appoint an examiner for the disputation following consultation with the primary supervisor. For other issues the rules concerning disputations laid down by the relevant department or research area apply.

12. Gender Equality Policy

The Special Doctoral Programme in Language and Linguistics aspires to a fair gender distribution.

13. Student influence and quality control

Doctoral student representatives are part of the programme's steering committee. The programme will continually follow up courses and the seminar series with course evaluations.