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Guidelines for the use of scholarships for funding postgraduate education

Faculty of Science and Technology

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Guidelines for the use of scholarships for funding postgraduate education

1. Background

All doctoral students shall have adequate financial support throughout their period of study, which is guaranteed by the department that admitted the doctoral student. Doctoral students shall preferably be supported through appointment to a doctoral studentship (full-time employment as doctoral student). Doctoral students can be admitted with a different form of financial support, but the department must always guarantee support throughout their period of study. As of 1 July 2018, clearer regulation of funding through postgraduate scholarships (doctoral grants) was introduced into the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance (Ch. 5 Sec. 4 HEO):

§ 4 A doctoral student in receipt of a doctoral grant shall on application be appointed to a doctoral studentship no later than the date on which according to the individual study plan there remains a period of study corresponding to three years of full-time study before the award of a PhD or a doctorate in the fine, applied and performing arts. This does not apply, however, if the vice-chancellor has decided on the withdrawal of the student's resources pursuant to Section 30 of Chapter 6 of this Ordinance. Ordinance (2017:947).

§ 4a A doctoral student in receipt of a doctoral grant does not need to be appointed pursuant to Section 4 if the grant is awarded as part of

1. an aid and capacity building programme in which grants are an accepted form of funding with reasonable terms and conditions and the admitting higher education institution has insight into these terms and conditions and into how the grant is paid, or

2. a programme funded by the European Union or other partnerships, in which grants with reasonable terms and conditions comprise an accepted form of funding and where requirements for funding through employment are a barrier to participation for the admitted higher education institution.

These guidelines regulate the prerequisites and limitations for study funding through postgraduate scholarships at the Faculty of Science and Technology.

2. Basic principles related to funding through postgraduate scholarships

1. Doctoral students with scholarship funding receive the same net income as doctoral students appointed to a doctoral studentship according to the pay ladder for doctoral students and pursuant to Section 36 of Chapter 7 of the Higher Education Ordinance. If the applicant intends to be active alternately in Sweden and another country (e.g. doctoral students within Sida's sandwich programme and doctoral students in joint education programmes (joint/double degree)), the requirement for net income only applies to the time when the doctoral student is active in Sweden.
2. An agreement between Uppsala University and the scholarship organisation shall guarantee reasonable scholarship terms and conditions for doctoral students. For this, the University must be given insight into the terms and conditions of the scholarships as well the prerequisites for their disbursement (see 4. Agreement with the scholarship organisation).

3. At the Faculty, once three years of full-time studies remain, funding through scholarships is only permitted if the scholarship satisfies the exemption criteria specified in Section 4a of Chapter 5 of the Higher Education Ordinance and fulfils the Faculty's definition and limitation (see 5. Exception criteria according to Section 4a of Chapter 5 of the Higher Education Ordinance).
4. At the Faculty, funding through scholarship the first year only followed by appointment to a doctoral studentship (pursuant to Ch. 5, Sec. 4 HEO) is only permitted if the doctoral student position is advertised in open competition in accordance with Section 5 of Chapter 4 of the Higher Education Ordinance. The scholarship may not be a prerequisite for the doctoral student position. Selection among the applicants shall only be carried out with consideration given to their ability to successfully conduct their studies, in accordance with Section 41 of Chapter 7 of the Higher Education Ordinance. When three years of full-time studies remain, the doctoral student shall be appointed to a doctoral studentship in accordance with Section 4 of Chapter 5 of the Higher Education Ordinance. The scholarship terms and conditions must meet the same requirements as those for scholarships that satisfy the exemption criteria specified in Section 4a of Chapter 5 of the Higher Education Ordinance.
5. Admission of a doctoral student funded through scholarship in accordance with 2.3 or 2.4 requires careful assessment. Preparation of admission cases takes place in the Faculty's Postgraduate Education Board and the final decision is made by the Executive Committee of the Faculty Board. An agreement with the scholarship organisation must be in place before preparation.

3. Prerequisites for partnership with scholarship organisations

An important prerequisite for a good partnership with the scholarship organisation is the possibility of maintaining a dialogue regarding mutual requirements and expectations for the partnership and the doctoral students receiving funding from the scholarship organisation. The Faculty recommends that study funding through postgraduate scholarships take place within long-term and established partnerships where these prerequisites are satisfied.

The instance (see 4. Agreement with the scholarship organisation) that enters into an agreement with a scholarship organisation shall strive to ensure that the terms and conditions for the scholarship are as good as possible in relation to, for example, the amount of the scholarship, that the doctoral student is given the opportunity to teach at the basic and advanced level, and that reasonable requirements are placed on Uppsala University and the doctoral students being funded through the scholarship.

Admission of scholarship-funded doctoral students shall be preceded by a quality review that ensures that the candidate has both formal qualifications and the prerequisites required for the programme. Anyone accepting a doctoral student with scholarship funding shall strive to have as much influence as possible over the recruitment process, if this is handled by the scholarship organisation.

4. Agreement with the scholarship organisation

An agreement between Uppsala University and the scholarship organisation shall clearly specify the scholarship terms and conditions (see 5. Exception criteria according to Section 4a of Chapter 5 of the Higher Education Ordinance) and how the scholarship is disbursed, any commitments from the respective parties, and other information relevant to the content and structure of the studies.

Depending on the subject scope of the partnership, an agreement is entered into at the university level, the faculty level or the department level. For partnerships that include funding of doctoral students within more than one disciplinary domain, there must be a university-wide agreement. Before being signed, the agreement must be reviewed by the Faculty Office and the Legal Affairs Division.

The agreement shall be written in a way that does not obligate Uppsala University to accept doctoral students within the partnership.

The following areas must be considered in the agreement:

1. *The scholarship's time span and total amount.*
2. *Any requirements related to total gross time for the studies.*
3. *How the scholarship is disbursed, e.g. in what way and at what frequency.*
4. *Other benefits that may be included in the scholarship, such as reimbursement of travel expenses or other expenses and insurance.*
5. *Commitments/obligations for the doctoral student, such as reporting or return requirements.*
6. *Circumstances that may lead to the student having to repay all or part of the scholarship.*
7. *Prerequisite for absence from studies due to illness, parental leave or other leave.*
8. *That the University is not obligated to accept doctoral students upon granting of the scholarship.*
9. *That the prospective doctoral student must satisfy general and special qualification requirements in order to be admitted.*
10. *That the doctoral student must follow a general and individual study plan after admission.*
11. *Obligations placed on the University, for example in the form of reporting requirements related to the doctoral student's progress.*
12. *That the University is not responsible for the doctoral students' obligations in the form of, for example, reporting and return requirements or scholarship repayment obligation.*
13. *If the doctoral student is given the opportunity to teach or perform other departmental duties during their studies (which may require the University to fund the associated cost in the form of longer gross period of study).*
14. *If the agreement is general in nature and is in force for a longer period of time, supplementary information on the amount of the scholarship may be stated in another document that is binding on the part of the scholarship organisation. It should be clearly indicated that the responsible department at UU shall provide supplementary funding of the doctoral student if needed so that the total net income is in line with the pay ladder for doctoral students.*
15. *Whether the doctoral student has the right to retain the scholarship for a longer or shorter period of absence, for example due to illness, parental leave or a general leave of absence.*
16. *The agreement should include a description of the admission process.*

5. Exception criteria according to Section 4a of Chapter 5 of the Higher Education Ordinance

Since 1 July 2018, Section 4a of Chapter 5 of the Higher Education Ordinance specifies exception criteria for the use of scholarships that are paid once three years of full-time studies remain. It is up

to the higher education institutions to define these exception criteria with reference to that the set criteria should ensure compliance with the purpose of the Ordinance.

Aid and capacity building programme

Pursuant to Paragraph 1 of Section 4a of Chapter 5 of the Higher Education Ordinance, a doctoral student does not have to be appointed to a doctoral studentship pursuant to Section 4 if the scholarship is awarded as part of “*an aid and capacity building programme in which grants are an accepted form of funding*”. The aid and capacity building programme shall aim to build capacity in a country that is part of the DAC/OECD list (all levels of the DAC list of ODA Recipients) at the time of doctoral student’s admission. At the Faculty, funding through scholarships in accordance with paragraph 1 of Section 4a is permitted if 1) the scholarship organisation is domiciled in one of these countries or 2) if the scholarship organisation has the stated purpose of striving for capacity building in one of these countries. The admission of doctoral students can only take place if the scholarship organisation’s domicile is included in the DAC list, even if the agreement with the scholarship organisation has a longer period of validity.

Programme funded by the European Union or other partnerships

Pursuant to Paragraph 2 of Section 4a of Chapter 5 of the Higher Education Ordinance, a doctoral student does not have to be appointed to a doctoral studentship pursuant to Section 4 if the scholarship is awarded as part of “*a programme funded by the European Union or other partnerships, in which grants with reasonable terms and conditions comprise an accepted form of funding and where requirements for funding through employment are a barrier to participation for the admitted higher education institution*”. At the Faculty, partnerships with funding within an EU project or another project “equivalent in nature” are considered to fall within the framework of the exception in accordance with Paragraph 2 of Section 4a. Assessment of whether the partnership should be regarded as “equivalent in nature” is made by the Executive Committee of the Faculty Board after preparation in the Faculty’s Postgraduate Education Board prior to signing of any agreement with the scholarship organisation.

Reasonable scholarship terms and conditions and insight

For all scholarship partnerships that can be defined as an *aid and capacity building programme* pursuant to Paragraph 1 of Section 4a of Chapter 5 of the Higher Education Ordinance or a *programme funded by the European Union or other partnerships* pursuant to Paragraph 2 of Section 4a of Chapter 5 of the Higher Education Ordinance, there is a requirement that the scholarship terms and conditions be reasonable. This is ensured through the agreement (see 4. Agreement with the scholarship organisation). A net income in line with the pay ladder for doctoral students is guaranteed through the Faculty’s requirement to provide supplementary funding. Basic insurance cover is obtained through the University’s collective insurance through the Chamber of Commerce. In addition, the doctoral student must be offered a good working environment and good conditions for carrying out their postgraduate studies in accordance with a general and individual study plan. Like doctoral students with other funding, scholarship-funded doctoral students shall be entitled to leave corresponding to holiday, occupational health care and time for wellness care. If the applicant intends to be active alternately in Sweden and another country (e.g. doctoral students within Sida’s sandwich programme and doctoral students in joint education programmes (joint/double degree), the above applies during the periods that the doctoral student is active at Uppsala University.

The Faculty has the following specific requirements related to the terms and conditions for scholarships used for postgraduate funding:

- Absence due to illness, parental leave or other factors that are not attributable to the doctoral student substantially neglecting their commitments according to the individual study plan shall not give rise to a repayment requirement for completed study time.
- If the scholarship organisation stipulates a return requirement, this may not be linked with a request for repayment if the doctoral student does not comply with the order after completing their studies. Uppsala University accepts no responsibility for compliance with a return requirement.