Guidelines for the evaluation of third-cycle programmes

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Introduction

This guidance document concerns evaluation of third-cycle programmes. These guidelines are based on the national system for quality assurance in higher education, 2016–2022, that the Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ) has reported in the report *National system for quality assurance in higher education – review of a government assignment* (Report 2016:15). Evaluation of third-cycle education is included in the programme evaluation component, which is one of four components within the national system of quality assurance in higher education.

National system for quality assurance in higher education

Quality assurance in higher education presupposes that quality assurance is conducted by higher education institutions (HEIs) as well as by UKÄ. This means that the HEIs and UKÄ have a shared responsibility for quality assurance in higher education. Valuing this shared responsibility has been a core principle of UKÄ in its work with the government assignment to develop a new system for quality assurance in higher education.[1] It has been important to create a clear link between UKÄ's reviews and the quality assurance processes at the HEIs, while also considering how UKÄ's reviews can contribute to further improving this work. It is also in line with international principles for quality assurance in higher education, *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG)[2] which deals with HEIs' internal quality work, the external quality assurance of HEIs' educational activities and the requirements that the quality assurance bodies must meet. To adhere to the agreements in ESG, both the HEIs and UKÄ must ensure compliance with these international principals for quality assurance.

UKÄ's reviews

The objectives of UKÄ's reviews are partly to assess the performance of the academic programmes and partly to contribute to the HEIs' work with quality improvements in higher education. The national system for quality assurance in higher education consists of the following four components:

- appraisal of degree-awarding powers
- institutional reviews of the HEIs' quality assurance processes
- programme evaluations
- thematic evaluations.

UKÄ strives to develop a model which is useful in various aspects for all four components but that can also support the HEIs' internal quality work. The model consists of the following six assessment areas.

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1 UKÄ's task is described in the public service agreement for the 2016 financial year pertaining to the Swedish Higher Education Authority (U2016/01132/UH, U2016/01349/UH), in the government communication *Assuring the quality of higher education* (2015/16:76) and in the report from the Education Committee and Riksdag Communication (report 2015/16:UbU9, Riksdag Communication 2015/16:155).)

2 *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG), 2015. See also UKÄ's Swedish translation, *Standarder och riktlinjer för kvalitetssäkring inom det europeiska området för högre utbildning* (ESG), 2015.

- governance and organisation
- preconditions
- design, implementation and outcomes
- student and doctoral student perspective
- working life and collaboration
- gender equality.

The assessment areas Governance and organisation; Preconditions; and Design, implementation and outcomes are based on both applicable Swedish law and ordinances as well as the ESG. Student influence and participation are regulated in the Higher Education Act, particularly in relation to the HEI's quality assurance processes (Chapter 1, section 4). Furthermore, the student perspective is more clearly described in the revised ESG (2015). Working life and collaboration are also regulated in the Higher Education Act. For example, first-cycle studies are to develop students' preparedness to face changes in the working life (Chapter 1, section 8). Gender equality and gender mainstreaming are key quality factors for consideration in the reviews. Like many other agencies and public HEIs, UKÄ is tasked with working with gender mainstreaming. This is also regulated in the Higher Education Act (Chapter 1, section 5).

UKÄ's reviews are based on the assessment criteria included in an assessment area. It has been important to keep the assessment criteria open-ended and to avoid micromanagement of how the HEIs choose to organise and conduct their educational activities. Assessment areas and the bases for assessment for evaluations of third-cycle programmes are defined in detail in this document.

All reviews will be conducted by independent assessment panels put together by UKÄ based on a nomination procedure in which HEIs, student unions and employee/employer organisations make suggestions for assessors. The assessment panels consist of student and doctoral student representatives, employer and working life representatives, and experts from the higher education sector, who are all participating on equal terms. UKÄ decision is based on the assessment panels' reviews.

For complete information on the national system for quality assurance in higher education, see the report *National system for quality assurance in higher education – review of a Government assignment* (Report 2016:15).

Evaluating third-cycle programmes

The programme evaluations check the actual conditions and results, e.g. that the programme meets the requirements in applicable laws and ordinances.

The programme evaluations assess how well the follow-up, measures and feedback processes systematically contribute to ensuring and improving quality in the reviewed programmes.

The programme evaluations also contribute to improving the HEIs' quality since the assessors provide feedback in their reports on both identified good examples and areas in need of improvement.

Purpose

The aim of programme evaluations is to monitor the programmes' outcomes and to contribute to the higher education institution's own quality improvements for the reviewed programmes.

The main principles for programme evaluations

All programme evaluations are based on the requirements of the applicable Swedish laws and ordinances; the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG); the government communication *Assuring the quality of higher education* (2015/16:76, report 2015/16:UbU9, Riksdag Communication 2015/16:155); and the government's bill *Third-cycle programmes with profiles and quality* (2008/09:134). The method is based on a general structure which applies to all degree levels.

The programme evaluations emphasise the actual conditions and results, that is, how the programme meets the requirements of applicable laws and ordinances. The programme evaluations focus on how the programmes ensure that doctoral students are given good opportunities to achieve the objectives of the System of Qualifications, and how the HEI ensures that the doctoral students have achieved the qualification targets upon graduation. The HEIs are also to describe and evaluate how well their follow-up, measures, and feedback routines contribute to systematically ensuring and developing the reviewed programmes.

In addition to monitoring the programmes' outcomes, the reviews are also to help the HEIs improve quality. In the report, the HEI may therefore be informed of both good examples and areas in need of development identified by the assessment panel.

Main principles for evaluation of third-cycle programmes

Programme evaluations of the third-cycle level are based on third-cycle programmes in their entirety, which comprises thesis work, courses and other parts.

The method is based on the assumption that the two levels of third-cycle education, licentiate degrees and doctorate degrees, are evaluated as a group. This is because both degrees are covered by the same requirements for research quality that apply to the general and the fine, applied and performing arts programmes that lead to qualifications at third-cycle level. Degree of doctor and degree of doctor in the fine, applied and performing arts have different qualification descriptions and will be assessed using the same procedure but in relation to the respective qualification descriptions.

The evaluations will be based on the third-cycle subject areas and the specialisations indicated in the general study plans that the HEI has established and in which the HEIs offer third-cycle education. A selection of the third-cycle subject areas that the HEI offers and which lead to licentiate and doctorate degrees will be included in the evaluations.

The path to obtain a doctorate may look very different, depending on such things as the field's traditions and the size of both the subject area and the HEI. Moreover, third-cycle programmes are based on the individual doctoral student and the specific thesis project. Both consideration and reflection are required when describing and assessing third-cycle programmes as a coherent whole. This makes it necessary for both the self-evaluation reports and their assessment to consider the variation inherent in an individual programme. Even if the thesis or the documented artistic research project is not included as a basis for the evaluation, examination of the processes that lead to the finished thesis or the documented artistic research project are relevant. It may, for example, include the HEI's various peer review processes associated with the thesis work by including supervision, seminars, workshops and conferences.

Selection principles for evaluation of third-cycle programmes

Planning for evaluating third-cycle programmes in the 2017–2022 six-year cycle is based on the fields of application and fields of research (in accordance with Swedish standard classification of research subjects (Standard för svensk indelning av forskningsämnen 2011). The six fields of research are the natural sciences, engineering and technology, medical and health sciences, agricultural sciences, social sciences and humanities, including artistic research.

The following selection criteria have been used whenever possible:

- All HEIs offering third-cycle programmes have at least one programme evaluated.
- At least one programme from each of the six research fields (see above) that an HEI offers third-cycle studies in is evaluated.
- All programmes within selected research subjects are evaluated to provide a picture of the situation at a national level.

To be excluded from an evaluation, the HEI must have decided to terminate the relevant programme before the evaluation begins, that is to say, no later than when the self-evaluation is begun. A third-cycle subject area may also be exempted from an evaluation if there are no registered doctoral students that have been active in the last two years, or if the third-cycle subject area participated in the 2016 pilot evaluation with approved results.

A plan for the research subjects within which third-cycle subject areas will be evaluated within the framework of the 2017–2022 six-year cycle is available on UKÄ's website.

Assessment areas and assessment criteria

Programme evaluations at the third-cycle level include four assessment areas:

- preconditions
- design, implementation and outcomes (including gender equality and follow-up, measures and feedback)
- doctoral student perspective
- working life and collaboration

The assessment areas contain one or more assessment criteria. An overall assessment will be given for each assessment area. For the evaluations to be legally correct, predictable and transparent, the assessment criteria are to be made known in advance and be common to all programmes within the same evaluation.

Below is an account of the assessment criteria included in third-cycle programme evaluations. Each assessment criterion is followed by instructions aimed at clarify what is being requested. In the self-evaluation, the HEI is to describe, analyse and assess how the assessment criteria have been met within the framework of the evaluated programme. Because the programme evaluations are results-focused, it is essential that the HEI uses specific examples to illuminate how the assessment criteria are met.

Assessment area: Preconditions

The assessment area Prerequisitesincludes assessment criteria pertaining to staffand the third-cycle programme environment.

Staff

Assessment criteria:

The number of supervisors and teachers and their combined expertise (scholarly/artistic/professional and pedagogical) are sufficient and proportional to the volume, content and implementation of the programme in the short term and long term.

During their education, doctoral students receive supervision of high quality, which assumes that the supervisors have the scholarly expertise or artistic expertise required and that they have experience of doctoral student supervision and pedagogic expertise (such as through supervisor training). Each doctoral student should also receive supervision of a necessary scope, which means that there should be enough teachers who can be supervisors, as well as other doctoral degree-holding teachers and researchers or the equivalent who can serve as deputy supervisors.

Furthermore, it is important that teacher capacity is proportional to the programme's scope, teaching and examination. High-quality supervision resources are characterised by stability and availability. The HEI should therefore work with a long-term approach regarding both continuity and skills development among teachers and supervisors in the relevant programme. At the programme level, the HEI should create conditions for teachers and supervisors to take responsibility for maintaining and continuously improving academic/artistic and pedagogical competence, both individually and among colleagues. Strategies should also be in place for securing sufficient supervisor resources, for example in cases of retirement or if doctoral students need to change supervisors.

A description and analysis of supervisor expertise and supervisor capacity is to be supplemented with a report in the form of a table that follows the template in the annex to the self-evaluation.

Third-cycle programme environment

Assessment criteria:

Research/artistic research at the HEI has sufficient quality and scale for third-cycle education to be carried out at a high scholarly/artistic level and within a good educational framework. Relevant collaboration occurs with the surrounding society, both nationally and internationally.

The third-cycle programme environment refers to the environment in which doctoral students, supervisors are active and the programme is given in. In a good third-cycle programme environment, research/artistic research at the HEI has sufficient quality and scale for third-cycle education to be carried out at a high scholarly/artistic level. There should also be genuine opportunities for teachers and supervisors to pursue research.

In addition to the quality of research, the third-cycle programme environment should also feature other educational conditions required for the breadth of the subject. Critical mass and how different interactions and partnerships are created are meaningful for doctoral students' access to various research perspectives and research foci. For example, how are seminar organised, including the procedures for ensuring the quality of the thesis for the dissertations? Managing the percentage of doctoral students who complete the programme in another location or in another environment is important, for example when it comes to participation in seminars. This also applies to supervisors and other researchers.

A good third-cycle programme environment also considers what opportunities doctoral students are given for collaboration with researchers both nationally and internationally, as well as with the surrounding society. It is very important for the programme to work to

broaden the third-cycle programme environment for doctoral students through local, national, and international networks to which the doctoral students and supervisors belong. This is also true of the way in which doctoral students are included in existing networks and how these complement the third-cycle programme environment's scope and quality.

Assessment area: Design, implementation and outcomes

The assessment area Design, implementation and outcomesincludes the components of the qualitative targets that have been selected for evaluation under the forms of proficiency *knowledge and understanding*; *competence and skills* and *judgment and approach*. This assessment area also includes *gender equality* and *follow-up, measures and feedback*.

Qualitative targets

Third-cycle programmes have a number of formulated qualitative targets in the System of Qualifications (Annex 2 to the Higher Education Act). The qualitative targets describe what doctoral students need to have achieved upon receiving a degree. To limit the scope of the evaluation, certain qualitative targets have been omitted, fully or partially. The main selection principle has been to exclude the targets, or parts of targets, that are usually assessed through the thesis or in the documented artistic research project and the dissertation. It is reasonable to assume that there are differences in the way the qualitative targets are taught and assessed, depending on both how the individual thesis project is designed and separate traditions of the field.

It is interesting here to see how the structure of the programme ensures that the targets of the Higher Education Ordinance are achieved. This structure is in the form of courses, seminars, conferences, publication, participation in the projects of senior researchers, supervision time, allocation of credits between courses and other elements. It is also of importance how the HEI works to ensure doctoral students have access to the courses they need, for example through their own courses, partnerships with other HEIs, encouragement to take international courses.

Target attainment for the form of proficiency knowledge and understanding

Assessment criteria:

The programme facilitates, through its design and implementation and ensures through examination that doctoral students who have been awarded their degrees can show broad knowledge and understanding both within their third-cycle subject area and of the scientific methodology/artistic research methodology in the third-cycle subject area.

This form of knowledge relates to the fact that doctoral students should be able to demonstrate broad knowledge and understanding both within the third-cycle subject and of various scientific/artistic research methods within the third-cycle subject.

The concept 'broad' is to be interpreted here as broad within the third-cycle subject. UKÄ's evaluations of third-cycle programmes are based on the third-cycle subject area. At the same time, the Higher Education Ordinance mentions 'research field' instead of 'third-cycle subject area' when discussing targets for knowledge and understanding, including in the wording 'broad knowledge and understanding in the research field'. As 'research field' is not clearly defined, UKÄ has chosen to interpret breadth in the research field to mean breadth in third-cycle subject area.

Examples of questions to answer to clarify how the HEI ensures doctoral students achieve the targets: What does broad knowledge entail within the framework for a programme in this third-cycle subject? Throughout the entire programme, what is done for doctoral students to achieve this target? Which peer-review steps, such as supervision, seminars, workshops and conferences, are arranged to help doctoral students achieve the qualitative target? What other activities, such as lecture series and courses, within the programme aim to support doctoral students in achieving the qualitative target? How is progression achieved during the programme and what is the link between qualitative targets, learning outcomes, learning activities and examinations?

Target achievement for 'competence and skills

Assessment criteria:

The programme facilitates through its design and implementation, and also ensures through examination that doctoral students who have been awarded their degrees can demonstrate the ability to plan and use appropriate methods to conduct research and other qualified (artistic) tasks within predetermined time frames, and in both the national and international context, in speech, in writing and authoritatively, can present and discuss research and research findings in dialogue with the academic community and society in general. Doctoral students are able to contribute to the development of society and support the learning of others within both research and education and in other qualified professional contexts.

This form of proficiency involves doctoral students being able to plan and use appropriate methods to conduct research/artistic research and other qualified tasks within a given timeframe. Doctoral students also need to be able to present and discuss their research with authority in national and international contexts, verbally and in writing, and in dialogue with both the academic community and society in general.

Finally, doctoral students also need to be able to contribute to the development of society and support the learning of others within both research and education and in other advanced professional contexts.

Examples of questions to answer to clarify how the HEI ensures doctoral students achieve the targets: Throughout the entire programme, what is done for doctoral students to achieve this target? What peer-review steps, such as supervision, seminars, workshops and conferences, are arranged to help doctoral students achieve the qualitative target? What other activities, such as lecture series and courses, within the programme aim to support doctoral students in achieving the qualitative target? How is progression achieved during the programme and what is the link between qualitative targets, learning outcomes, learning activities and examinations?

Achievement of qualitative targets for 'judgement and approach'

Assessment criteria:

The programme facilitates through its design and implementation, and also ensures through examination that doctoral students who have been awarded their degrees can demonstrate intellectual autonomy, (artistic integrity), and scientific probity/disciplinary rectitude as well as the ability to make assessments of research ethics. The doctoral student also has a broader understanding of the science's capabilities and limitations, its role in society and human responsibility for how it is used.

This form of proficiency relates to the fact that doctoral students are able to demonstrate intellectual autonomy, (artistic integrity), and scientific probity/disciplinary rectitude and the ability to make assessments of research ethics. This form of proficiency also pertains to the fact that doctoral students are to attain deepened insight into the possibilities and limitations of science/art, its role in society and responsibility of the individual for how it is used.

Examples of questions to answer to clarify how the HEI ensures doctoral students achieve the targets: Throughout the entire programme, what is done for doctoral students to achieve this target? Which peer-review steps, such as supervision, seminars, workshops and conferences, are arranged to help doctoral students achieve the qualitative target? What other activities, such as lecture series and courses, within the programme aim to support doctoral students in achieving the qualitative target? How is progression achieved during the programme and what is the link between qualitative targets, learning outcomes, learning activities and examinations?

Gender equality

Assessment criteria:

A gender-equality perspective is taken into account, communicated and supported by the content, design and implementation of the programme.

Gender equality refers to equality between the sexes and that all people, regardless of gender, have the opportunity to shape society and their own lives. This means that within the programme, there should be an awareness of gender equality and this awareness be expressed concretely in both qualitative and quantitative measures. For example, this could involve a dialogue specifically about gender equality in conjunction with planning the programme's structure and teaching. It could also mean that the gender equality perspective is included in the selection of course literature, teachers, supervisors and external lecturers.

Follow-up, measures and feedback

Assessment criteria:

The content, design, implementation and examinations are systematically followed up. The outcomes of the follow-up are translated, when necessary, into measures for quality improvement, and feedback is given to relevant stakeholders.

The HEI works for the doctoral student to carry out the programme within the planned period of study.

Ensuring that a programme is of high quality in both the short and long term requires follow-up of the programme's design, implementation and outcomes. Accordingly, this is about how the HEI's follow-up, measures and feedback processes for the education cycle systematically contribute to ensuring and enhancing quality in the reviewed programmes. The HEI is to report how the programme's various components are continuously followed up and how the results are addressed. A key component in the processing of follow-up results is notifying the affected parties, such as teachers, supervisors and doctoral students, of any measures or changes as a way of supporting the quality work and continuous learning.

The assessment criteria for follow-up, measures and feedback also include the HEI's work with student completion. The HEI is to describe the analysis process of student completion of the programme and dropouts that occur. The HEI is also to report what measures are taken and what support is given to create the conditions for doctoral students to finish the programme within the established period of time.

Assessment area: Doctoral student perspective

Assessment criteria:

Doctoral students are given the opportunity to take an active role in the work to improve the content and implementation of the programme.

The programme ensures a good physical and psycho-social work environment for the doctoral student.

The doctoral student perspective is about actual doctoral student influence on the programme, both formally and informally. Formal influence entails, among other things, the representation of doctoral students in various bodies and platforms. The way in which doctoral students participate in decision processes is relevant, including the preparation of issues affecting third-cycle education and how the information channels look for reaching doctoral students so that they may have an active role in efforts to develop the programme.

Doctoral student influence also involves individual influence, which is more informal and pertains to individual doctoral students. For example, how can a doctoral student take an active role in improving the programme and the learning processes? The HEI must report the opportunities of doctoral students to participate in the quality work for the programme and in the development of the programme. It is also to describe the information channels that exist for obtaining the viewpoints of doctoral students.

The doctoral student perspective also entails ensuring a good psychosocial working environment for doctoral students. This could mean, for example, that there are employee surveys where the results are analysed and turned into improvement measures and that there are well functioning processes for changing supervisors. Doctoral students should also have a good physical work environment. This could mean everything from the physical workplace and the balance between requirements for physical presence and other forms of communication, for example web-based collaboration to access to necessary infrastructure, such as literature and other teaching materials, technical informational resources, laboratory conditions, workshops and rehearsal facilities. It is also important how doctoral students who work part-time for another employer are integrated into the third-cycle programme environment.

Assessment area: Working life and collaboration

Assessment criteria:

The programme is designed and implemented in such a way that it is useful and develops doctoral students' preparedness to meet changes in working life, both within and beyond academia.

The working life and collaboration involve whether the programme is useful on the working life and how the programme prepares doctoral students for an ever-changing working life both within and beyond academia. This means that after obtaining their degree, doctoral students are to be able to use the knowledge and skills they obtained through their studies and further build upon them during their entire professional lives and in different working life contexts. This requires doctoral students, during their studies, to obtain both subject-specific knowledge and general proficiency and abilities. In this assessment area, the HEI must report how the programme is updated and adapted to suit the working life, as well as how relevant information is collected for the quality assurance and improvement of the programme with regard to its usefulness and preparation for working life.

This assessment area also includes whether the HEI works to take advantage of alumni experiences when developing the programme, and the extent to which doctoral students are given the opportunity for departmental duties or similar in the form of teaching, administration or other work.

This assessment could also be linked to significant capacities for the workplace, such as communicating, planning, engaging in advanced tasks and adhering to timeframes.

Finally, it is also relevant to see how collaboration takes place through interactions between academia and different types of private or public players in the HEI's community, and also between any workplaces of industry-employed or partner doctoral students.

Assessment material

Assessment material consist of the HEI's self-evaluation with annexes, the general study plan for the third-cycle subject, randomly selected individual study plans and interviews with representatives of the reviewed programme and doctoral students. All assessment materials for the review is to be weighed together. The evaluation also factors in other material which UKÄ produces, see the section 'Other supporting material'.

Theses or documented artistic research projects will not be used as assessment material for the evaluation of third-cycle programmes. UKÄ has concluded that existing external reviews of these are already sufficient, since they have a dissertation and external examination committee members, as stated in the Higher Education Ordinance Chapter 6, sections 33–34.

UKÄ Direkt

All written documents are uploaded and registered by the HEI on UKÄ Direkt, which is the HEIs portal for UKÄ's online case management system. UKÄ will also upload information to UKÄ Direkt that the HEIs need prior to and during the evaluation, for example a user manual for UKÄ Direkt, guidance documents and a self-evaluation template. Each HEI has an administrator for UKÄ Direkt that distributes login information to the HEI's other users and that can answer questions about UKÄ Direkt.

The HEI's self-evaluation

The self-evaluation aims to give the HEI the opportunity to show that the evaluated programme meets the assessment criteria for the assessment areas. The HEI is to describe, analyse, evaluate and, using specific examples, demonstrate how it systematically ensures and follows up the quality of the evaluated programme, and how it ensures that doctoral students have met the qualitative targets upon receipt of the degree. The emphasis of the self-evaluation should be more on an evaluation than on a description. The HEI is to provide examples in the self-evaluation that describe both strengths and identified areas in need of improvement, including planned and implemented measures to further improve the

programme and ensure high quality. This is intended to give the assessors an understanding of the programme as a whole and how the internal processes work to drive quality improvements.

The self-evaluation is entered into UKÄ's template and should not exceed 30 pages. To facilitate the evaluation, the HEIs are asked to follow the template structure for their reports. The self-evaluation template can be downloaded from UKÄ Direkt, and the completed self-evaluation can be uploaded and registered to the site 10 weeks after the initial meeting.

Background description

The self-evaluation begins with a short background description aimed at positioning the programme in a larger context. The background description is to include background factors important for the assessment panel to be aware of and that cannot be directly related to the assessment criteria.

In the background description, the HEI should report on how long the programme has existed and describe its organisation and structure. It is also important to include a description of the third-cycle subject area's content and delimitation with regard to breadth and depth, whether there are different foci within the area, and the relationship of the third-cycle subject area to current research at the HEI. Other information that is important for assessors to understand is how doctoral students are recruited to the programme and the composition of the supervisor group and doctoral student group (gender, age, focus and linguistic capabilities relevant to the programme). The share of international doctoral students should also be included in the description, as well as whether any doctoral students are located in other cities. What opportunities and challenges have been identified with these and, if so, how have they been handled?

HEIs with a field that includes a third-cycle programme with a subject to be evaluated are to describe the field it has degree-awarding powers and how the third-cycle subject relates to this field.

Annexes to the self-evaluation

To facilitate a fair evaluation, it is important that the HEI's presentation in the self-evaluation is complete and can be understood without any additional information. Annexes to the self-evaluation consist of tables with information about the number of doctoral students, supervisors and other researchers as well as publication lists (see Annex 1 *Instructions for annexes to the self-evaluation in these guidelines*).

General study plans

Pursuant to section 25 of the Higher Education Ordinance, a HEI authorised to issue degrees at third-cycle level is to decide which subjects

are offered in the third-cycle programme (SFS 2010:1064) according to section 26 of the Higher Education Ordinance, there is to be a general study plan for each subject that is a part of the programme.

The general study plan must specify the main content of the programme, requirements for specific entry requirements and other necessary regulations (pursuant to Section 27).

Individual study plans

A random selection of individual study plans will be reviewed for each programme. The individual study plans are to be archived for all doctoral students. Under the Higher Education Ordinance, these are to be 'reviewed regularly' and 'amended by the HEI to the extent required' (Chapter 6, section 29).

According to the Higher Education Ordinance, the study plan is to include the HEI's and doctoral student's commitments:
1. An individual study plan shall be drawn up for each doctoral student.
2. The plan shall contain the undertakings made by the HEI.
3. The plan shall contain the doctoral student's undertakings regarding the HEI.
4. The plan shall contain a timetable for the doctoral student's study programme.
5. The plan shall be adopted after consultation with the doctoral student and his or her supervisors. The individual study plan shall be reviewed regularly and amended by the higher education institution to the extent required after consultation with the doctoral student and his or her supervisors.

Individual study plans, and procedures for their review, should therefore be able to provide information about quality assurance and how programmes ensure progress and the doctoral students' achievement of qualitative targets. Individual study plans may also be used for in-depth reviews of the how programmes ensure that the doctoral student achieves the targets, as well as ensuring access to the breadth and depth of the third-cycle programme and education environment. If study plans are managed in a structured and systematic way, they can provide a picture of how the programme ensures that individual doctoral students achieve different targets, for example, through descriptions of courses taken, conferences that the doctoral student has been involved in and other activities. They can also supplement information about the degree of access the doctoral student has to his or her research environment's breadth and depth, for example by describing participation in seminar activities, supervision and so on.

Individual study plans included in an evaluation are randomly selected using a model where a maximum of 16 individual study plans per programme are included. Each HEI uploads to UKÄ Direkt a list of

doctoral students whose individual study plans will be included in the evaluation. If there are more than 16 individual study plans, 16 individual study plans are randomly chosen. If no individual study plans are available, the evaluation will be based on other documentation.

Course syllabi

If the HEI feels that syllabi are necessary to strengthen the content of the self-evaluation, they can be uploaded to UKÄ Direkt. Syllabi are only used as supplementary information which the assessment panel can access if it needs to verify or understand anything in greater detail. No other documents are to be attached and uploaded to UKÄ Direkt.

Interviews

Interviews are carried out with representatives of the reviewed programme and with doctoral students enrolled in the programme.

The purpose of the HEI interview is to supplement the overview the assessors have obtained from the self-evaluation, general and individual study plans and other documentation. The assessors are also given an opportunity to confirm that existing information has been properly interpreted. The interview is also an opportunity for the HEI to meet the assessors and submit any supplementary verbal information that clarifies the self-evaluation. The HEI determines who will participate in the interview.

The purpose of the doctoral student interview is to supplement other documentation with the experiences of doctoral students about how well the programme creates sufficient conditions for the students to be able to achieve the qualitative targets. Furthermore, the doctoral student interviews may bring to light areas that the assessors need to pay particular attention to when assessing the quality of the programme.

Doctoral students to be interviewed should preferably be appointed by a doctoral student organisation that either belongs to a doctoral student union or has union status at the HEI. If the doctoral student union is unable to recruit doctoral students, UKÄ, in consultation with the HEI's quality officer or other designated person, will ensure that doctoral students are recruited for the interviews.

Interviews with both representatives of the HEI and doctoral students are carried out in the form of web meetings. The interviews may vary in length depending on how many questions the assessment panel wishes to ask. The assessors interview doctoral students first, followed by teacher representatives, and finally management representatives. Both the HEI and the doctoral students will be given instructions for the interview about two weeks before it takes place. The doctoral students will also receive the HEI's self-evaluation well before the interview. The

project manager at UKÄ will be informed about the HEI representatives (not doctoral students) chosen for participation in web interviews approximately one week prior to the date of the interview.

Other supporting material

Prior to the evaluations, UKÄ produces support documents about the programme that is relevant for the assessment areas to be evaluated. Where relevant, these documents are to be considered by both the HEI and the assessment panel. For example, this could be official statistics showing the student completion rate and establishment level, previous inspection cases, appraisals of degree-awarding powers and previous programme evaluations. The material then serves as a basis for discussions and questions during the interview. The material will be available for the HEI in UKÄ Direkt in conjunction with the initial meeting. The material serves as a basis for discussions and questions during the interview. The HEI may also comment on the material in the self-evaluation.

Assessment panels

The assessors are recruited according to the usual nomination procedure in collaboration with the HEIs, doctoral student unions (via the Swedish National Union of Students, SFS) and working life organisations. UKÄ, however, appoints the assessment panels. Collectively, the panel is to have sufficiently broad and extensive expertise to assess all assessment areas included in the evaluation.

The assessment panels usually consist of:
• external experts
• doctoral student representatives
• employer and working life representatives.

The collective knowledge and experience of the experts and employer, working life and doctoral student representatives allow the assessment panels to make joint assessments of the assessment areas included in the evaluation. The experts should have extensive expertise and experience with the design of third-cycle education and with the third-cycle subject under evaluation. The role of the doctoral student representative is to support the doctoral student perspective, participate in the assessment of all assessment areas included in the evaluation, and add their perspective as doctoral students. The role of the working life representative is primarily, based on the working life perspective together with the rest of the assessment panel, to assess the usefulness and working life preparedness resulting from the evaluated programmes.

As a quality assurance measure, the HEIs can comment on the assessment panel's composition, for example, to point out conflicts of interest, before the panel is officially appointed by UKÄ.

The assessors will attend a training programme in UKÄ's evaluation and working methods. The training programme aims to clarify the assignment and expectations and is usually done together with several evaluation projects within the same component and review round. The training includes an orientation about the laws, ordinances and ESG which the assessors must consider, a review of UKÄ's quality assurance system, and the assessment areas and assessment criteria that are connected to the relevant evaluation. The training programme also covers interview techniques and addresses gender equality issues.

The assessors' assignment is to:
- discuss the assessment areas and assessment criteria
- participate in meetings during the entire evaluation process
- as a group, be represented at the initial meeting with the HEIs to be included in the evaluation
- review the different assessment material and explain their assessmentsin writing
- • jointly prepare questions for interviews with doctoral students, supervisors and the HEI's administration
- • summarise the assessments in a joint statement including the assessment panel's proposed overall judgement and proposed decision.
-
- gemensamt förbereda frågor till intervjuer med doktorander, handledare och ledning vid lärosätet
- sammanfatta bedömningar i ett gemensamt yttrande inklusive bedömargruppens förslag till samlat omdöme och förslag till beslut.

A special assessor handbook[3] describes, among other things, the assessment panel's role in the review process and the primary steps in the implementation of the reviews. Together with the guidelines for each

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3   This handbook is available on UKÄ's website, www.uka.se

individual component, this handbook aims to serve as support for the assignment as an assessor and in the assessment work.

Initial meeting

As a first step in the evaluation process, UKÄ requests an introductory, initial meeting for representatives from each HEI, a representative for the assessment panels (usually the chairperson) and staff from UKÄ.

The overall objective of this introductory meeting is to provide the HEIs with a solid understanding of the evaluation and its content, focus and implementation. The meeting gives the HEIs a chance to ask UKÄ and assessment panel representatives questions about the assessment criteria and the evaluation process.

During the meeting, UKÄ also presents other assessment material included in the evaluation, the assessment panel's composition and a schedule for the evaluation.

Report and decision

Assessment panel's report

All material will be considered in the assessment panel's assessment of how well the programme fulfils the assessment criteria for the reviewed assessment areas. All included assessment areas must be judged as satisfactory for the programme to be assessed as maintaining high quality.

The assessment panel's determinations and reasoning are to be clearly presented in a report. This report will serve as feedback to the HEI on areas needing development and good examples identified by the assessors. Furthermore, anything judged to have insufficient quality is to be clearly stated.

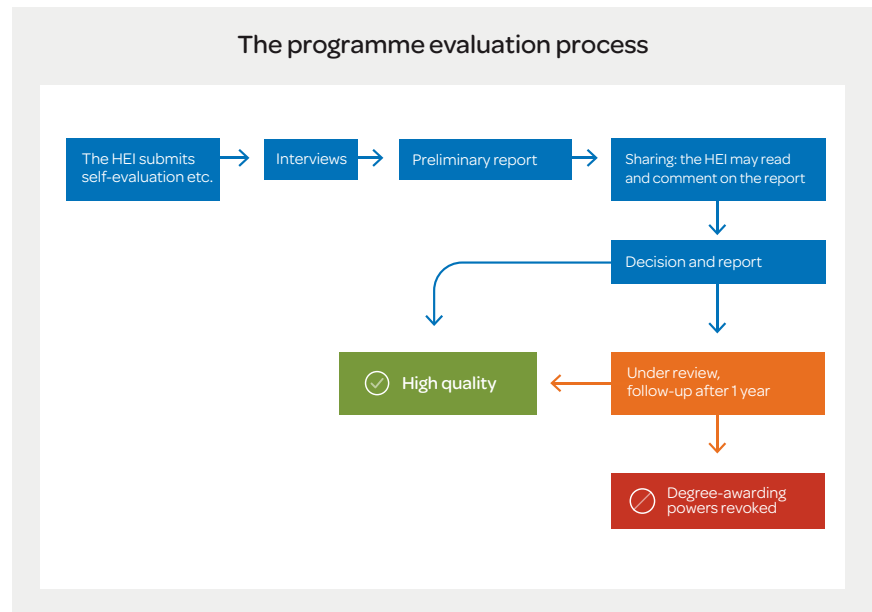## Sharing of assessment panel's report

The assessment panel's draft report will be sent to the HEI for comment before UKÄ makes its final decision. The purpose of this is to give HEIs the opportunity to check the contents and comment on any factual mistakes in the report. The period for comment is three weeks. The assessors read the HEI's responses and make changes to the report where relevant. The HEI's written response will be attached to the report.

Decision

The final report from the assessment group forms the basis for UKÄ's decision.
The overall assessment is given on a two-point scale. Supported by the assessor panel's report, UKÄ will decide if the programme maintains high quality or if the programme is under review. If a programme is under review, this means that UKÄ is also questioning the degree-awarding powers in the relevant third-cycle subject area. Information on decisions is published at www.uka.se.

The following diagram illustrates the process of the programme evaluations.

Figure: The programme evaluation process

The HEI submits self-evaluation etc. → Interviews → Preliminary report → Sharing: the HEI may read and comment on the report → Decision and report → High quality / Under review, follow-up after 1 year → Degree-awarding powers revoked

Follow-up

As with previous evaluation systems, HEIs with programmes under review will have one year to address the deficiencies and submit a measure report to UKÄ. To review the HEI's report of measures taken, UKÄ appoints a panel of assessors which, if necessary, can request additional documentation and require an interview if they consider that the material is not sufficient to make an assessment. When the panel considers that it has an adequate basis, the taken measures are evaluated and a report is then submitted to UKÄ.

Supported by the assessor panel's report, UKÄ will decide if the programme now maintains high quality or if the degree-awarding powers are to be revoked. UKÄ makes decisions for state HEIs, except for the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences and the Swedish Defence University. For independent higher education providers, the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences and the Swedish Defence University, the assessment panel's report and UKÄ's position are submitted to the Government for decision.

In cases where a state HEI has its degree-awarding powers revoked, enrolled students who have already begun their studies have a right to complete the education (Chapter 1, section 14 of the Higher Education Act).

The HEIs may also terminate the programme under review. In such cases, the HEI is to notify UKÄ of its decision to terminate the programme under review no later than the last day for submitting the report of measures taken. The case will then be closed. If the decision to terminate the programme comes in after the last day to submit a measure report, the case will then not be closed. In these cases, UKÄ will conduct a follow-up and examine the question of degree-awarding powers for the relevant programme.

UKÄ believes that it is also important to follow-up those programmes that have been judged high quality. The forms for this type of follow-up may vary and could range from surveys and telephone interviews to feedback conferences and other types of follow-up activities.

Annex 1.
Instructions for self-evaluation annexes

Table 1a

Use Table 1a to report all enrolled and registered doctoral students during spring semester 2018. Do not list doctoral students who were admitted more than 15 years ago, i.e. earlier than spring semester 2003. State here all doctoral students who do not have study leave included in their studies. The purpose of the tables is to give the assessors a picture of the doctoral students in the specific third-cycle programme today. The first column contains the doctoral student's name. UKÄ also wants to know to which third-cycle subject the doctoral student is enrolled. The columns relating to the year of birth, gender and year of admission are intended to give the assessors information about the composition of the doctoral student group. The current funding form refers to spring semester 2018. The different forms of funding are shown in the table footer. Also specify the extent if the student has more than one type of funding. If you have revised the general study plan (GSP), mark which doctoral students have not gone over to the currently applicable GSP.

Table 1b

In Table 1b, provide data on doctoral students who have obtained their doctoral or licentiate degree in the last five years. The purpose of the table is to give the assessors a picture of the student completion rate in the specific third-cycle programme as well as dissertation subject. In the column 'Year degree was obtained', write whether this pertains to a licentiate or doctoral degree, i.e. 2016 (lic.), 2014 (doc.). An individual may therefore appear in the table twice. A doctoral student listed in Table 1a may also be included in Table 1b with their licentiate degree.

Table 2

Use Table 2 to present active senior supervisors and active supervisors who are not senior supervisors (deputy supervisors). The purpose of the table is to give the assessors a picture of the third-cycle programme environment, the composition of the supervisor group and its continuity and stability. In the 'position' column, also indicate whether the supervisors have any other qualifications you want to highlight, for example 'senior lecturer (associate professor)'. Information about gender, date of birth, third-cycle education and research subjects gives assessors a

picture of the composition of the supervisor team, and information about the scope of their employment informs about continuity and stability in the programme. In the column Scope of position at the HEI (per cent), for supervisors employed at another HEI write '0% – active at another HEI'. The column 'research field' refers to which subject the person's position or employment is within.

Table 3

Use Table 3 to list other researchers, including post-doctoral researchers, associated with the third-cycle programme. The purpose of the table is to give the assessors additional information about the third-cycle programme environment if the HEI considers this necessary to provide more information. Please specify clearly how the expertise of these researchers benefits the doctoral students. Explain how these researchers are a part of the third-cycle programme environment. In the 'position' column, also indicate whether the person has any other qualifications you want to highlight, for example 'senior lecturer (associate professor)'. The column 'research field' refers to which subject the person's employment is within.

Publications/accepted works*

Publication lists and lists of accepted works may for example verify the quality and scope of the research/artistic research, the research activity in the environment, and the opportunities of supervisors and teachers to conduct research/artistic research. They mayalso demonstrate the breadth and depth of the third-cycle programme environment and of collaborations with the community.

Publications/accepted works* doctoral students

List a maximum of 10 publications and/or accepted works for the doctoral students named in Table 1a. In cases in which doctoral students have been inactive for two years or more, the publications of these doctoral students do not need to be included in the list. Conference presentations can be included, as well as popular science publications.

Publications/accepted works* supervisors

List a maximum of 10 publications and/or accepted works for the supervisors named in Table 2. Mark peer-reviewed publications with an asterisk (*). Conference presentations can be included, as well as popular science publications

Publications/accepted works* other researchers

List a maximum of 10 publications and/or accepted works for the researchers named in Table 3. Mark peer-reviewed publications with an

asterisk (*). Conference presentations can be included, as well as popular science publications.

Course syllabi

Syllabi may be attached as an annex to the self-evaluation in cases in which the HEI finds them relevant for the evaluation.

Uploading to UKÄ Direkt

All of the tables are to be uploaded in Excel format to the UKÄ Direkt portal. Publication lists and any syllabi are to be uploaded in Word or PDF format.

In the list of individual study plans uploaded to UKÄ Direkt, only list doctoral students who have been active *in the past two years*. Doctoral students who participate as assessors in the evaluation are not to be listed in UKÄ Direkt.

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* For accepted works, see SwePub's definition of artistic output with two subcategories: artistic works and curated/produced exhibition.

Artistic work: All types of artistic works, including recordings and live performances. This includes fiction, musical compositions, visual art, design/architecture, handicrafts, artists' books, film, video, TV, radio, performance, theatre, music, dance and circus.

Curated/produced exhibition: This includes curated/produced exhibitions and events, for example thematically organised music festivals, in which the originator is associated with the HEI. .

Annex 2.
Third-cycle qualifications
General qualifications

Degree of Licentiate [Licentiatexamen]

Scope

A Degree of Licentiate is awarded eitherafter a third-cycle student has completed a study programme of at least 120 credits in a subject in which third-cycle teaching is offered, orafter a third-cycle student has completed one part comprising at least 120 credits of a study programme intended to conclude with the award of a PhD, if a higher education institution decides that a Degree of Licentiate of this kind may be awarded at the institution.

Outcomes

Knowledge and understanding

For a Degree of Licentiate the third-cycle student shall demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the field of research including current specialist knowledge in a limited area of this field as well as specialised knowledge of research methodology in general and the methods of the specific field of research in particular.

Competence and skills

For a Degree of Licentiate the third-cycle student shall
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues with scholarly precision critically, autonomously and creatively, and to plan and use appropriate methods to undertake a limited piece of research and other qualified tasks within predetermined time frames in order to contribute to the formation of knowledge as well as to evaluate this work
- demonstrate the ability in both national and international contexts to present and discuss research and research findings in speech and writing and in dialogue with the academic community and society in general, and
- demonstrate the skills required to participate autonomously in research and development work and to work autonomously in some other qualified capacity.

Judgement and approach

For a Degree of Licentiate the third-cycle student shall
- demonstrate the ability to make assessments of ethical aspects of his or her own research
- demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and
- demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for his or her ongoing learning..

Thesis

For a Degree of Licentiate the third-cycle student shall have been awarded a pass grade for a research thesis of at least 60 credits.

Miscellaneous

Specific requirements determined by each higher education institution itself within the parameters of the requirements laid down in this qualification descriptor shall also apply for a Degree of Licentiate with a defined specialisation.

Degree of Doctor

Scope

A Degree of Doctor is awarded after the third-cycle student has completed a study programme of 240 credits in a subject in which third-cycle teaching is offered.

Outcomes

Knowledge and understanding

For the Degree of Doctor the third-cycle student shall
- demonstrate broad knowledge and systematic understanding of the research field as well as advanced and up-to-date specialised knowledge in a limited area of this field, and
- demonstrate familiarity with research methodology in general and the methods of the specific field of research in particular.

Competence and skills

For the Degree of Doctor the third-cycle student shall
- demonstrate the capacity for scholarly analysis and synthesis as well as to review and assess new and complex phenomena, issues and situations autonomously and critically

- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues with scholarly precision critically, autonomously and creatively, and to plan and use appropriate methods to undertake research and other qualified tasks within predetermined time frames and to review and evaluate such work
- demonstrate through a dissertation the ability to make a significant contribution to the formation of knowledge through his or her own research
- demonstrate the ability in both national and international contexts to present and discuss research and research findings authoritatively in speech and writing and in dialogue with the academic community and society in general
- demonstrate the ability to identify the need for further knowledge and
- demonstrate the capacity to contribute to social development and support the learning of others both through research and education and in some other qualified professional capacity.

Judgement and approach

For the Degree of Doctor the third-cycle student shall
- demonstrate intellectual autonomy and disciplinary rectitude as well as the ability to make assessments of research ethics, and
- demonstrate specialised insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used.

Research thesis (doctoral thesis)

For the Degree of Doctor the third-cycle student shall have been awarded a pass grade for a research thesis (doctoral thesis) of at least 120 credits.

Miscellaneous

Specific requirements determined by each higher education institution itself within the parameters of the requirements laid down in this qualification descriptor shall also apply for a Degree of Doctor with a defined specialisation. (SFS 2013:617)

Qualifications in the fine, applied and performing arts

Degree of Licentiate in the fine, applied and performing arts [Konstnärlig licentiatexamen]

Scope

A Degree of Licentiate in the fine, applied and performing arts is awarded eitherafter a third-cycle student has completed a study programme of at least 120 credits in a subject in which third-cycle teaching is offered, orafter a third-cycle student has completed one part comprising at least 120 credits of a study programme intended to conclude with the award of a Degree of Doctor in the fine, applied and performing arts, if a higher education institution decides that a Degree of Licentiate in the fine, applied and performing arts of this kind may be awarded at the institution.

Outcomes

Knowledge and understanding

For a Degree of Licentiate in the fine, applied and performing arts the third-cycle student shall
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the field of research including current specialist knowledge in his or her artistic field as well as specialised knowledge of research methodology in general and the methods of the specific field of research in particular.

Competence and skills

For a Degree of Licentiate in the fine, applied and performing arts the third-cycle student shall
- demonstrate creative capacity in his or her artistic field
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate artistic issues with scholarly precision critically, autonomously and creatively, and to plan and use appropriate methods to undertake an artistic research project and other qualified artistic tasks within predetermined time frames in order to contribute to the formation of knowledge as well as to evaluate this work
- demonstrate the ability in both national and international contexts to present and discuss research and research findings in speech and writing and in dialogue with the academic community and society in general, and

- demonstrate the skills required to participate autonomously in research and development work and to work autonomously in some other qualified capacity.

Judgement and approach

For a Degree of Licentiate in the fine, applied and performing arts the third-cycle student shall
- demonstrate the ability to make assessments of ethical aspects of his or her own research
- demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of art, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and
- demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for his or her artistic development.

Documented artistic research project

For a Degree of Licentiate in the fine, applied and performing arts the third-cycle student shall have been awarded a pass grade for an artistic research project of at least 60 credits.

Miscellaneous

Specific requirements determined by each higher education institution itself within the parameters of the requirements laid down in this qualification descriptor shall also apply for a Degree of Licentiate in the fine, applied and performing arts with a defined specialisation.

Degree of Doctor in the fine, applied and performing arts [Konstnärlig doktorsexamen]

Scope

A Degree of Doctor in the fine, applied and performing arts is awarded after a third-cycle student has completed a study programme of 240 credits in a subject in which third-cycle teaching is offered.

Outcomes

Knowledge and understanding

For a Degree of Doctor in the fine, applied and performing arts the third-cycle student shall

- demonstrate broad knowledge and systematic understanding of the research field as well as advanced and up-to-date specialised knowledge in his or her artistic field, and
- demonstrate familiarity with artistic research methodology in general and the methods of the specific field of research in particular.

Competence and skills

For a Degree of Doctor in the fine, applied and performing arts the third-cycle student shall

- demonstrate creative capacity in his or her artistic field
- demonstrate the capacity for artistic analysis and synthesis as well to review and assess new and complex phenomena, issues and situations autonomously and critically
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate artistic issues with scholarly precision critically, autonomously and creatively, and to plan and use appropriate methods to undertake research and other qualified artistic tasks within predetermined time frames and to review and evaluate such work
- demonstrate through a documented artistic research project the ability to make a significant contribution to the formation of knowledge through his or her own research
- demonstrate the ability in both national and international contexts to present and discuss research and research findings authoritatively in speech and writing and in dialogue with the academic community and society in general
- demonstrate the ability to identify the need for further knowledge, and
- demonstrate the capacity to contribute to social development and support the learning of others both through research and education and in some other qualified professional capacity.

Judgement and approach

For a Degree of Doctor in the fine, applied and performing arts the third-cycle student shall

- demonstrate intellectual autonomy, artistic integrity and disciplinary rectitude as well as the ability to make assessments of research ethics, and
- demonstrate specialised insight into the possibilities and limitations of art, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used.

Documented artistic research project (doctoral thesis)

For a Degree of Doctor in the fine, applied and performing arts the third-cycle student shall have been awarded a pass grade for a documented artistic research project (doctoral thesis) of at least 120 credits.

Miscellaneous

Specific requirements determined by each higher education institution itself within the parameters of the requirements laid down in this qualification descriptor shall also apply for a Degree of Doctor in the fine, applied and performing arts with a defined specialisation. (SFS 2014:125)

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Sweden as a knowledge society. We review the quality of higher education
programmes; we analyse and follow - up trends within higher education and
we monitor the rights of students.

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