

Instructions for administrating the withdrawal and reinstatement of doctoral student resources

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**Karolinska
Institutet**



Instructions for administrating the withdrawal and reinstatement of doctoral student resources

Contents

1 Introduction.....	3
2 Purpose.....	3
3 Relevant regulations.....	3
4 In what situations can resources be withdrawn?	4
5 What happens once resources are withdrawn?.....	5
6 Administration.....	5
6.1 Meeting with the supervisors.....	5
6.2 Meetings with the departmental management	6
6.3 Follow-up.....	6
6.4 A request for the withdrawal of resources	6
6.5 The president's investigation	7
6.6 Request rejected.....	7
7 How does the withdrawal of resources affect a doctoral studentship and other forms of income?	7
8 Right to representation and translation.....	8
9 Application to reinstate supervision and other resources.....	8

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1 Introduction

A doctoral is entitled to supervision and other resources during his or her education provided that the president decides to withdraw said resources under Chapter 6 Section 30 of the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100).

These instructions describe the administration of resource withdrawal at a departmental level, the head of department's request to the president to have the resources withdrawn, and the processing of the request prior to the president's decision.

The instruction also covers the administration of a doctoral student's application to reinstate previously withdrawn resources.

2 Purpose

These instructions have been drawn up to support the preparation and decision-making process with respect to the withdrawal and reinstatement of doctoral student resources and to ensure that the procedures are conducted in an efficient and legally secure manner.

3 Relevant regulations

Chapter 6 Section 29 Paragraph 1 of the Higher Education Ordinance provides that an individual study plan must be drawn up for each doctoral (third-cycle) student. This plan must include the obligations of the doctoral student and the higher education institution and a timetable for the doctoral student's study programme. The plan must be adopted after consultation between the doctoral student and his or her supervisors.

The second paragraph provides that the individual study plan must be reviewed regularly and amended by the higher education institution as necessary and after consultation with the doctoral student and his or her supervisors. The period of study may only be extended if there are special grounds for doing so.

According to Section 30, if a doctoral student substantially neglects his or her obligations under the individual study plan, the president shall decide that this student is no longer entitled to supervision and other study resources. Before such a decision is made, the doctoral student and his or her supervisors must be given an opportunity to make representations. The case must be considered on the basis of their statements and other available records. The assessment must consider whether the higher education institution has fulfilled its own obligations under the individual study plan. The decision must be in writing and provide reasons.

Resources may not be withdrawn for any period in which the doctoral student has been appointed to a doctoral studentship.

A decision to withdraw resources for a doctoral student or not to reinstate said resources may be appealed to the Higher Education Appeals Board. The Board's decisions may not be appealed (Higher Education Ordinance Chapter 12 Section 2 Item 6, and Section 5).

4 In what situations can resources be withdrawn?

The Rules for Doctoral Education at Karolinska Institutet¹ state that the doctoral student's individual study plan and his or her progress must be followed up once a year.

Resources may only be withdrawn if a doctoral student neglects his or her undertakings as specified in the individual study plan. The plan must therefore be clearly worded and detailed, and followed up regularly.

A request to withdraw resources shall be made if a doctoral student seriously neglects his or her individual study plan obligations. This would be the case, for example, if despite access to adequate supervision and other necessary resources for his or her planned studies, a doctoral student demonstrates an inability to continue his or her studies in a reasonable manner within the allotted time.

¹ Rules for Doctoral Education at Karolinska Institutet, ref. no 1-749/2022

The extent to which the higher education institution has fulfilled its own obligations under the individual study plan must be taken into consideration when deciding whether or not to withdraw resources.

Resources for a doctoral student may only be withdrawn as a final sanction once all other possible measures have been exhausted.

5 What happens once resources are withdrawn?

When a doctoral student's resources are withdrawn, he or she will lose access to all resources, including supervisors, courses, workplace, computer, telephone, KI account, laboratories, equipment and all other teaching resources.

A doctoral student whose resources have been withdrawn remains registered as a doctoral student at KI and is entitled to study independently and unaided and to be examined – i.e. to undergo a public thesis defence or a licentiate seminar.

6 Administration

6.1 Meeting with the supervisors

If a doctoral student neglects his or her obligations as specified in the individual study plan, the principal supervisor, aided by the co-supervisor(s), is to address the matter with the student promptly. The principal supervisor shall also inform the departmental HR office, which takes the matter to the Negotiation Unit of the University Administration's HR Office. The supervisors should introduce more, and more frequent sessions with the student to check adherence to his or her individual study plan and make clear performance demands. All actions taken, communication with HR and agreements with the doctoral student shall be documented and follow up.

If the supervisor/co-supervisors feel that the student continues to neglect his or her obligations despite the above measures, they shall inform the head of department, the administrative manager and the director of doctoral education accordingly.

6.2 Meetings with the departmental management

The department's director of doctoral education, in consultation with the head of department and administrative manager, summon both the student and his or her supervisor(s) to a meeting to discuss the matter and hear the student's and the supervisor(s) views on the situation. Prior to the meeting the doctoral student shall be informed of its content and of his or her right to representation or assistance (see Section 8). The meeting shall be documented and copies of the notes sent to all participants.

The meeting may decide on a range of measures, including a revision of the individual study plan, additional supervisory support or a change of supervisor. A revision is to include a schedule for and the content of the remaining period of study, and shall clearly define the responsibilities of the different supervisors and all other resources at the student's disposal.

6.3 Follow-up

The director of doctoral education and the supervisors then follow up what has been decided. Additional follow-up meetings and further revisions may be necessary.

6.4 A request for the withdrawal of resources

If the doctoral student continues to neglect his or her individual study plan obligations despite the above action by the department, the head of department shall request the president to consider withdrawing his or her resources. The request to do so is made by the head of department at which the student is enrolled.

The request shall contain a summary account of the manner in which the student has seriously neglected his or her individual study plan obligations. It shall also state the way in which KI has fulfilled its obligations as set forth in the same plan and the remedial measures that have been tried or considered. The following documents must be appended.

- Records of the meetings attended by the student, supervisors and departmental management.
- All versions of the student's individual study plan.
- Relevant emails and other such documentation.

Karolinska Institutet – Instructions for administrating the withdrawal and reinstatement of doctoral student resources

- All supervisor assessments of the student's current results and his or her ability to meet his or her individual study plan obligations.

The request is to be made to the president and sent to the registrar at registrator@ki.se.

6.5 The president's investigation

The president is required to investigate the request, during which the student and his or her supervisor(s) are to be given an opportunity to comment.

6.6 Request rejected

If there are no grounds for the withdrawing of resources, it falls to the head of the department at which the student is enrolled to ensure that he or she continues to have access to the resources to which he or she is entitled, and to consider other remedial action.

7 How does the withdrawal of resources affect a doctoral studentship and other forms of income?

The Higher Education Ordinance provides that resources may not be withdrawn for any period in which a student has been appointed to a doctoral studentship.

If the head of department requests the withdrawal of a doctoral student's resources, the studentship should only be prolonged for the period within which a final ruling on the case is expected.

When a withdrawal decision has gained legal effect, the studentship shall not be renewed.

If the doctoral student is employed outside KI, the employer shall be notified of the decision.

If the doctoral student is in receipt of external scholarships/grants for his or her education, the scholarship/grant provider shall be notified by KI of the decision.

It falls to the department to ensure that the employer or scholarship/grant provider receive the information.

8 Right to representation and translation

A doctoral student is entitled to be represented by a counsel who will plead his or her case.

KI has a student/doctoral student ombudsperson employed by the Medical Students' Association. A doctoral student who faces losing his or her resources shall be promptly informed of this independent support function. The doctoral student ombudsperson may not represent the student.

If a doctoral student is a member of a union, he or she may contact the union for support and help with representation.

If the case concerns a doctoral student who does not speak Swedish, translations shall be provided, on request, of written documentation and statements so that the student may exercise his or her rights in accordance with Section 13 of the Administrative Procedure Act (2017:900).

9 Application to reinstate supervision and other resources

Chapter 6 Section 31 of the Higher Education Ordinance provides that if educational resources have been withdrawn, the doctoral student may have his or her right to supervision and other resources reinstated after application to the president. The student must then convincingly demonstrate, by presenting prospective study results of considerable quality and scope or in some other way, that he or she is able to fulfil the remaining individual study plan obligations.

On receipt of such an application, the president has the case investigated. An independent expert may be engaged to assist in the procedure.