

# Steering document for external review of KI's doctoral education

Dnr 1-760/2024



**Karolinska  
Institutet**



# Steering document for external review of KI's doctoral education

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Administrative responsibility: FIR/FFU		Other involved parties: The council for systematic quality assurance (Rådet för systematiskt kvalitetsarbete, RSK)	

## Introduction

According to the Higher Education Act, higher education institutions must achieve high quality in education and research. KI's quality system is designed to ensure that KI works effectively and efficiently to fulfil the requirements of the Higher Education Act and the Higher Education Ordinance, and that the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG) are followed.

KI's quality assurance system consists of two overarching processes prescribed by ESG 1.9. One is the internal monitoring that takes place continuously. The second process is the review performed by external reviewers. The two processes are interlinked in that the results of reviews and follow-ups form the basis for the further development of the organisation and activities.

This steering document describes the principles, method and implementation of self-initiated regular external reviews of KI's doctoral education.

## Basic principles

- An external review of KI's doctoral education shall be conducted every eight years. If the Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ) or another external organisation reviews all or parts of KI's doctoral education, this replaces the KI-initiated review for the current period.
- The subject of the review is medical science, which means that the entire KI doctoral education is covered.
- The method for the review shall be based on the method described in the UKÄ's guidelines for doctoral education evaluations.
- The review shall be conducted in such a way that it contributes to the continued development of the quality of KI's doctoral education.

## Assessment criteria

The same assessment criteria and evaluation questions are used as in the guidelines from UKÄ (version 2024):

### **Assessment of the prerequisites:**

- Human resources
- Doctoral education environment

**Assessment of design, realisation and results:**

- Achievement of intended learning outcomes regarding:
  - Knowledge and understanding
  - Proficiency and ability
  - Judgement and approach

See the attachment for more information on assessment criteria and evaluation questions.

## Review panel

**Task**

The task of the panel is to review KI's doctoral education based on the assessment criteria.

The panel first makes a preliminary assessment based on written documentation. This is followed by interviews aimed at refining and verifying the impressions gained from the preliminary assessments.

Thereafter, there is an opportunity to ask further questions and request supplementary information.

The review should result in a report with the group's reflections and recommendations, structured according to the assessment criteria, and including a final overall conclusion.

**Composition of the panel**

The panel shall be composed of a total of five external, independent persons, as follows:

- Four senior experts
  - Two from Swedish universities, but not KI
    - One person with a combined position in a Swedish university and in a region, who is expected to have a special focus on doctoral education in health care and the labour market perspective.
  - At least one, preferably two, belonging to university outside Sweden, preferably a Nordic one.
- One doctoral student
  - Registered at a Swedish university, but not KI
  - To review from the doctoral student's perspective.

The group appoints a convenor/contact person from among its members.

### **Competences**

The review panel shall collectively cover the following competences:

- Good knowledge and experience in the management and development of doctoral education
- Good knowledge of medical science
- Good knowledge and experience of doctoral education in a clinical setting
- Experience of doctoral education at a university outside Sweden
- Desirable: knowledge of medical pedagogy and/or higher education pedagogy

### **Financial compensation**

Each member of the panel receives a fee equal to the opponent's fee at KI<sup>1</sup>.

### **Recruitment**

#### *Senior reviewers*

Nominations for suitable persons are sought from existing local, national and international networks. The Committee for Doctoral Education (KFU) appoints assessors.

#### *Doctoral student*

The student organisation at KI decides how the doctoral student is identified and appointed.

## **Basis for the review**

The following form the basis for the review:

1. Written report consisting of 1) a description of KI's doctoral education with relevant appendices, and 2) KI's self-evaluation
2. Interviews

If the panel sees a need for additional information/documentation to ensure its assessment, this will be provided.

### **Written report: Description and self-evaluation**

An introductory part of the report shall describe KI in general and KI's doctoral education specifically and, for the foreign reviewers, a description of the Swedish education system.

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<sup>1</sup> Current level in 2025 is SEK 15 000

The self-evaluation should both describe the university-wide structures and frameworks, as well as highlighting differences between different environments and groups of doctoral students, e.g. different research areas and different ways of funding doctoral students.

The report should contain reflections and analyses within the assessment criteria and provide answers to the evaluation questions supported by concrete examples. Both strengths and weaknesses should be highlighted.

The report is written in English. Documents considered appropriate for clarification or exemplification are attached.

The results and material from the internal monitoring are used as a basis for the KI self-evaluation:

- The departments' reports from their respective self-evaluations within the 4-year follow-up<sup>2</sup>
- Information gathered during dialogues with the organization<sup>3</sup>
- Results from the survey exit poll<sup>4</sup>
- Summaries of course evaluations and course analyses
- Statistics from e.g. Ladok and the ISP system

The student perspective in the self-evaluation is important. How this is best obtained is decided in consultation with the student organization

How the report is structured and how the work is organised is discussed and decided before each review round.

## **Interviews**

Interviews are conducted in person during a site visit. It is done in groups with about 6–8 people in each interview group.

The following functions constitute interview groups:

1. Doctoral students: The selection of doctoral students is decided in consultation with the student organisation. Within the group there should be a balance between research areas, clinic/pre-clinic, gender etc.
2. Supervisors: Selected in such a way that there is a balance between research areas, clinic/pre-clinic, gender etc. Do not need to be linked to the students in group 1.

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<sup>2</sup> Anvisningar för uppföljning av institutionens ansvar för forskarutbildning, dnr 1-838/2024

<sup>3</sup> Anvisningar verksamhetsdialog, dnr 1-1186/2022

<sup>4</sup> Anvisningar exit poll, dnr 1-1185/2022

3. Directors of doctoral studies at the KI departments: The group is made up in such a way that different types of departments are represented.
4. Responsible for doctoral courses: For example, those in charge of thematic doctoral programmes, director or chair of a research schools, chair or member of the course- and programme committee.
5. KI's doctoral education management: Academic vice president of doctoral education, vice chair of the Committee of Doctoral Education, central director of doctoral studies. Possibly: Another member of the Committee of Doctoral Education, the chair of the Dissertation Committee (this group could be smaller than 6 people)

Interviews will be conducted in English, unless otherwise mutually agreed by those present.

If the review panel sees a need for additional interviews, this will be organised.

## Responsibilities and organisation

The Committee for Doctoral Education (KFU) has a responsibility for KI's doctoral education both at the university/faculty level, and at the programme level. KFU is thus responsible both for decisions on methodology, assessment criteria and review panel, and is the recipient of the reviewers' report.

Coordinators with the university administration prepare proposals for the appointment of reviewers, coordinates and documents the self-evaluation work, organises the site visit, and ensures that the work is carried out in accordance with these instructions.

## Follow-up the review result

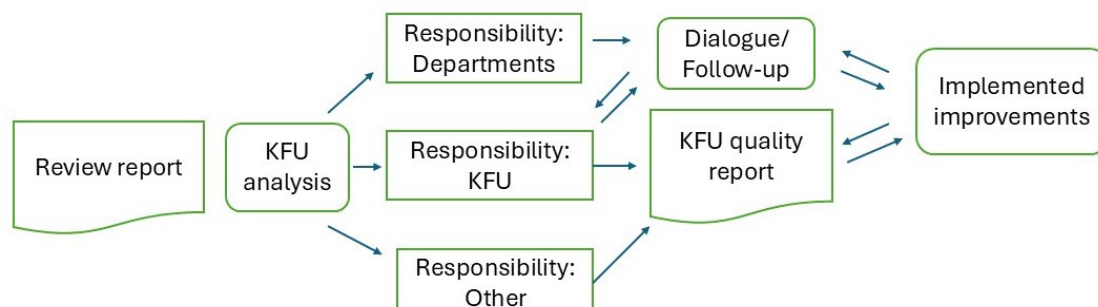
KFU analyses the conclusions and recommendations of the reviewers' report and discusses what actions should be taken and who is responsible.

KFU indicates its planned and implemented actions in the annual committee report to the Faculty Board.

Results and analyses are forwarded to the parties concerned, to the departments or to other responsible parties (e.g. the Faculty Board, the University Administration or the KI President).

Follow-up of improvement measures in the departments are carried out within the regular continuous internal monitoring.

Schematic illustration of how the results of the review will be handled and how they are intended to lead to improvements:



## Follow-up the method and process

At the end of the review, the methodology, process and outcomes should be discussed, and the strengths and weaknesses of the methodology analysed. This is documented as a basis for planning the next external review. If necessary, this steering document will be updated.



## Attachment: Assessment criteria

### 1. Assessment of human resources:

#### **Assessment criteria**

The number of supervisors and teachers and their combined competences (scientific and pedagogical) are adequate and proportionate to the volume, content and realisation of the doctoral education.

#### **Evaluation questions**

- What scientific and pedagogical competence do the supervisors, co-supervisors and teachers with whom the doctoral students come into contact during the programme have?
- How does KI work to ensure that the supervisory and teaching resources are characterised by stability and availability? How are sufficient supervisory resources ensured, e.g. in the event of retirement or if the doctoral student needs to change supervisor?
- How does KI work to ensure that supervisors and teachers can maintain and continuously develop both their scientific and pedagogical expertise, both individually and collectively?

## 2. Assessment of the doctoral education environment:

### **Assessment criteria**

The quality and scope of research at KI are such that the doctoral education can be conducted at a high scientific level.

The doctoral education environment provides good educational conditions in other aspects.

Relevant collaboration takes place with the surrounding society both nationally and internationally.

### **Evaluation questions**

- How does KI work to ensure that the quality and scope of research is such that doctoral education can be conducted at a high scientific level?
- How does KI work to ensure that all doctoral students have access to a good doctoral education environment?
- What support structures are in place for doctoral students to help them achieve the intended learning outcomes?
- What opportunities for collaboration, both with researchers nationally and internationally and with the surrounding society, are offered to doctoral students?

### 3. Assessment of the achievement of intended learning outcomes

#### Knowledge and understanding:

##### Assessment criteria

Through its design and realisation, KI's doctoral education enables and ensures through examination that the doctoral student, when the degree is awarded, can demonstrate broad knowledge and understanding of both the doctoral education subject/research field\* and of scientific methodology within the doctoral education subject/research field\* (degree outcome A1 and A2).

##### Evaluation questions

- What does broad knowledge and understanding mean within the framework of KI's doctoral education in medical science?
- How is work done, throughout the doctoral education, to ensure that doctoral students achieve the above outcomes? For example, how is progression achieved during the education, and what is the link between objectives, intended learning outcomes, learning activities and examination?
- How does KI work with the individual study plan so that it supports the achievement of the intended learning outcomes?

\* The UKÄ's guidelines focus on "the doctoral education subject" but at KI it makes more sense to include the "the research field", since all doctoral students are admitted to the same doctoral education subject.

#### **4. Assessment of the achievement of intended learning outcomes: Proficiency and ability**

##### **Assessment criteria**

Through its design and realisation, the KI's doctoral education enables and ensures through examination that the doctoral student, when the degree is awarded, can demonstrate the ability to plan and conduct research and other qualified tasks using appropriate methods within given time frames, and in both national and international contexts can present and discuss research and research results with authority in dialogue with the scientific community and society in general (degree objectives B2 and B4).

The doctoral student shall also demonstrate the prerequisites for contributing to the development of society and supporting the learning of others, both in research and education and in other qualified professional contexts (degree objective B6)

##### **Evaluation questions**

- How is work done, throughout the doctoral education, to ensure that doctoral students achieve the above outcomes? For example, how is progression achieved during the education, and what is the link between objectives, intended learning outcomes, learning activities and examination?
- How does KI work with the individual study plan so that it supports the achievement of the intended learning outcomes?

## 5. Assessment of the achievement of intended learning outcomes: Judgement and approach

### Assessment criteria

Through its design and realisation, the KI's doctoral education enables and ensures through examination that the doctoral student, when the degree is awarded, can demonstrate intellectual independence, and scientific integrity as well as the ability to make ethical judgements (degree objective C1).

The doctoral student will have gained a deeper insight into the possibilities and limitations of science, its role in society and people's responsibility for how it is used (degree objective C2)

### Evaluation questions

- How is work done, throughout the doctoral education, to ensure that doctoral students achieve the above outcomes? For example, how is progression achieved during the education, and what is the link between objectives, intended learning outcomes, learning activities and examination?
- How does KI work with the individual study plan so that it supports the achievement of the intended learning outcomes?