



**Student Handbook  
for the  
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Programs in:  
Business Administration  
Economics  
Finance**

The rules and regulations recorded in the Student Handbook are ratified by the Faculty and Program Board.

This document is updated on an as-needed basis. The most recent version is published by the Program Office and posted on the SSE webpage ([www.hhs.se](http://www.hhs.se)) and on the SSE Portal. The document history (below) lists the changes made since publication of the first version of the document.

Latest update: 2014-12-15

## DOCUMENT HISTORY

The PhD Student Handbook replaces all previous versions of the PhD Academic Policies. The following changes concerning rules and regulations have been made to the content since the first version of the *Student Handbook for the Doctoral Programs* was approved on 2013-06-03:

2013-09-23 Change to section 3.9.1 Types of Dissertations, as approved by the Faculty and Program Board on 2013-09-23.

2014-03-11 Addition to section 3.10.2 Scheduling of the Defense, on including the three weeks needed for public display of the dissertation (“spikning”) in the scheduling for the defense.

2014-03-11 Addition to section 3.10.5 Distribution of the Dissertation, on the possibility of including the Re-examination period in August as part of the three “spikning” weeks for defenses taking place early in the Fall Semester (decision taken by Professorskollegiet 2006-05-22, minutes no.10 2005/2006).

2014-12-15 Addition to section 3.10 Rules and Regulations for the Doctoral Dissertation Defense, a new inserted section 3.10.1 Prerequisites for the Dissertation Defense, with subsections 3.10.1.1 Completed Course Component and 3.10.1.2 Completed Dissertation Component, requiring that the course component of the PhD is fulfilled before scheduling of the defense can take place; as approved by the Faculty and Program Board on 2014-12-15.

2014-12-15 Change to former section 3.10.1 Motion on Doctoral Defense (after amendment above, renumbered as section 3.10.2), on requiring that both the course component and the dissertation component be fulfilled before the Motion on Doctoral Defense can be sent to the Faculty and Program Board by the Head of Department; as approved by the Faculty and Program Board on 2014-12-15.

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## PREFACE

This Student Handbook for the SSE Doctoral Programs is a compilation of information, regulations and guidelines that are relevant to you as a student at the Stockholm School of Economics (SSE). It is intended for students enrolled in the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programs in Business Administration, Economics, and Finance. The overall purpose is to inform you about what regulations apply and to help you prepare for and complete your studies. It contains an overview of the curriculum (Chapter 2) and academic regulations (Chapter 3) for each program.

These academic regulations govern the relationship between SSE and you. The regulations stipulate and specify the responsibilities and rights you have as a student. One of your basic responsibilities is to stay informed about regulations and guidelines that are in effect during your studies.

You will find information about individual courses on the [SSE Portal](#)<sup>1</sup>. The [Student Support website](#)<sup>2</sup> will also provide you with information about various services offered at the school.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://portal.hhs.se/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://portal.hhs.se/StudentSupport/Pages/default.aspx>

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## 1 GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR STUDIES AT SSE

“The aim of the Stockholm School of Economics is to promote the advancement of business in Sweden through academic education and research” (SSE Charter section 1, §1 1909).

More than 100 years have passed since the first students began their studies at SSE, and this aim has remained intact and continues to guide the School’s activities and priorities. However, the internationalization of Swedish economic life, globalization in general and the internationalization of higher education have led SSE to extend its outlook, reach and activities well beyond the borders of Sweden.

At present SSE offers the following degree programs:

- Three-year Bachelor of Science Program in Business & Economics (Stockholm)
- Three-year Bachelor of Science Program in Retail Management (Norrtälje/Stockholm)
- Two-year Master of Science in International Business (Stockholm)
- Two-year Master of Science in Business & Management (Specialization in Management; Specialization in Marketing & Media Management) (Stockholm)
- Two-year Master of Science in General Management (Stockholm)
- Two-year Master of Science in Finance (Specializations in Corporate Finance and in Investment Management) (Stockholm)
- Two-year Master of Science in Economics (Specializations in Applied Economic Analysis and in International Economics) (Stockholm)
- Two-year Master of Science in Accounting & Financial Management (Stockholm)
- Four-year PhD Program in Business Administration (Stockholm)
- Four-year PhD Program in Economics (Stockholm)
- Four-year PhD Program in Finance (Stockholm)
- SSE MBA Executive Format (Stockholm)
- Executive MBA Program (Riga)
- Executive MBA program (Russia)

SSE also offers three double-degree programs at the master’s level:

- CEMS Master in International Management (CEMS MIM) together with CEMS<sup>3</sup>, the Global Alliance in Management Education.
- Double-degree program in Finance together with Università Commerciale Luigi Bocconi, Milan, Italy.
- Double-degree program in Economics with the University of St. Gallen (HSG), Switzerland.

SSE works in close collaboration with the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga (SSE Riga), where a BSc program in Economics & Business and executive education programs are offered.

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<sup>3</sup> CEMS is a global alliance of leading business schools and multinational companies, see also <http://www.cems.org/>

The Bachelor of Science programs are intended mainly for those who are recent secondary school graduates with outstanding grades and with limited or no work experience. The Master of Science programs provide an advanced-level education and are intended for students who already hold a bachelor degree. In addition to its bachelor and master programs, SSE has doctoral programs for students with a university degree in one of the economic disciplines, as well as executive education programs for students with relevant professional experience.

Unless otherwise explicitly stated below, what is mentioned herein regarding PhD Students and SSE PhD Programs also applies for SSE LLD Students.

## 1.1 STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The programs of the Stockholm School of Economics are characterized by an open atmosphere with an emphasis on student attendance and active participation. Students are represented in all decision-making and some advisory bodies. Through your student representatives, you can convey your views on matters, such as program design. You can also convey your views directly to the teachers or the Program Directors. You are obliged to evaluate each course you attend using a web-based evaluation tool.

**You have rights, but you also have responsibilities as a student. SSE expects that you follow SSE's code of conduct. This means that you show respect for other students, teachers and other SSE staff members and that your conduct towards others upholds and promotes the reputation of the Stockholm School of Economics. SSE's policy states that everyone should be treated equally regardless of gender, religion, ethnicity, sexual preference, social background, disability etc.<sup>4</sup>**

The Faculty and Program Board at SSE handles matters of discrimination, harassment or grave misconduct. You must be aware of the regulations that apply to studies and examinations as well as the guidelines for being on SSE's premises. For more information about the academic regulations see Chapter 3. **When you are admitted to the Stockholm School of Economics, you sign a pledge by which you acknowledge and accept these regulations and SSE's rights to modify them and make decisions based on them (Appendix 2).**

## 1.2 TEACHING AND LEARNING

The academic year is divided into four teaching periods, period 1 and 2 in the fall and period 3 and 4 in the spring. Each period ends with an exam period. The fall semester takes place between August and January and the spring semester between January and June.

Teaching takes the form of lectures, seminars, projects and other assignments. Group instruction, projects, and written assignments are common and may be assigned to individuals or groups.

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<sup>4</sup> For further information please see the Equal Treatment of Students Policy 2011, available at <http://www.hhs.se/se/About/Jamlikhet/Documents/Equal%20Treatment%20of%20Students%20Policy%202011.pdf>

A cornerstone of the pedagogical approach for all Doctoral Programs is attendance and interaction. The learning process is based on close interaction among students and between students and faculty, both of which require substantial presence on the SSE premises.

## 1.3 SSE PORTAL

Through the [SSE Portal](#)<sup>5</sup> you can conduct functions such as viewing important course and program announcements, registering for courses, checking your schedule, accessing e-mail, and ordering transcripts or letters of enrolment. To access the SSE Portal, please use your SSE registration number as your username. The SSE Portal is the most important information channel at SSE and all important information is uploaded to the Portal.

Contact details for SSE doctoral students are registered in SSE's database. Each doctoral student is obliged to report any change of address, or other change of status, to the Program Administrator and the SSE Personnel Department without delay.

## 1.4 REGISTRATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Students have to register for all **courses, seminar groups, and exams** and give notification of withdrawal from any of these on the SSE Portal. Students are registered automatically for compulsory courses for the first semester upon the start of the Doctoral Program (see Section 3.7).

Registering for a course is done on the *My upcoming courses* page on the SSE Portal or on the course's website during the registration period, which takes place in the term prior to the course being given – usually in April/May for fall courses and November/December for spring courses. You will find the exact dates for each registration period on the [Student Support](#)<sup>6</sup> website, which can be accessed via the SSE Portal.

*You will be automatically registered for some courses, but you have to register for other courses on your own. See the academic regulations in Section 3.7.*

## 1.5 STUDENT EVALUATIONS AND SURVEYS

### 1.5.1 Course Evaluations

All SSE courses are evaluated. After you have participated in a course, you are obliged to complete an evaluation of the course where all participants can express their opinions anonymously. This is an important tool for maintaining high quality and continuously improving the courses as well as one factor among others that determines teacher salaries and employment conditions. It also

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<sup>5</sup> See <https://portal.hhs.se/>

<sup>6</sup> See <https://portal.hhs.se/StudentSupport/Pages/default.aspx>



means that students and the teacher in charge can make relevant comparisons between courses and follow developments over time. Course evaluations are posted on the relevant website, as well as compiled quarterly in the quality reports, regardless of the form (or combination of forms) the evaluation has taken.

SSE is obliged to report on doctoral student activity levels, study interruptions, and degrees to Sweden's national statistics agency, Statistics Sweden (Statistiska Centralbyrån). To be able to submit accurate information, questionnaires are sent to doctoral students. The doctoral student is obliged to respond to these questionnaires within the stipulated time.

### 1.5.2 Other Evaluations

As SSE continuously improves its programs and services, it is also necessary to conduct a range of other evaluations during and after programs. The aim of these evaluations is to align the programs and services with the SSE vision, and with student needs. For these reasons, it is of great importance that SSE receives student input in order to further develop its programs.

### 1.5.3 Alumni Surveys

As an alumna/alumnus you will also receive surveys from SSE, such as surveys for program rankings and surveys for long-term program development. SSE also conducts surveys as a basis for school and program rankings, which are important for SSE's competitive positioning and for prospective students when they choose schools. Surveys intended for program development purposes may also be distributed, for example to examine the relative importance and usefulness of different program components in a long-term career perspective.

Responding to our surveys is an important way to support SSE and ensure the quality of its future offerings and graduates.

## 1.6 SERVICES AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS

### Academic Support & Records and Program Office

Student counseling, special needs and assistance in resolving student-health issues, formal grade transcripts, degree certificates, examinations, system support, scheduling, statistics, and central course administration are the main areas of responsibility of the Academic Support & Records department. For further information please see the [Student Support](https://portal.hhs.se/StudentSupport/Pages/default.aspx)<sup>7</sup> homepage on the SSE Portal.

Questions concerning program marketing, student recruitment, admissions, central course evaluation, program support, quality assurance, and student exchange are handled by the Program Office.

### SSE Library

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<sup>7</sup> <https://portal.hhs.se/StudentSupport/Pages/default.aspx>

The SSE Library functions as the principal information resource for SSE students, offering a vast array of printed and digital resources within business and economics. Apart from a major collection of printed books and journals, the library offers printed textbooks and reference collections, electronic books and journals, some 60 databases, reference management tools, and interlibrary loans from other libraries. All doctoral students can contact the library to arrange a time for individual instruction in the use of the library resources. For more information, please see the [Library website](#)<sup>8</sup>.

## IT Services

The IT Support group is available to support you in all IT related issues. You can contact them by phone, email or visit them outside the computer labs at Saltmätargatan 13-17. For contact information and a list of IT-related services available for you as a student, please see the [IT Support](#)<sup>9</sup> page on the SSE Portal. You can also have your laptop configured such that you can access Eduroam, the worldwide internet service for university students, researchers and staff.

## 1.7 SSE ALUMNI

SSE alumni have access to a unique network that is useful both in your personal and professional life. The SSE Alumni Office handles alumni affairs and welcomes your thoughts and ideas at [alumninet@hhs.se](mailto:alumninet@hhs.se).

## 1.8 STUDENT ASSOCIATION (SASSE)

The Student Association at SSE (SASSE) is a non-political, non-religious organization that has about 2,000 members from the BSc, MSc, and Doctoral Programs. SASSE exists thanks to the strong drive and commitment among the students and their wish to have fun and develop as a community. The purpose of SASSE is fundamentally to care for the joint interests of the students, which roughly can be summarized in educational coverage, extracurricular activities, and career services.

A modest annual student association membership fee allows you to have a Student card, which provides access to discounts for travel, clothes, and other local discounts. Please refer to the [SASSE website](#)<sup>10</sup> for more information.

## 1.9 STUDENT INSURANCE

PhD students registered at SSE are insured by the Stockholm School of Economics. The insurance covers medical treatment and travel due to medical treatment for accidents that occur during SSE and SASSE activities. Students should have a Swedish personal number (personnummer) and should be registered in the Swedish Social Insurance Agency (Försäkringskassan). The insurance does not

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<sup>8</sup> [www.hhs.se/library](http://www.hhs.se/library)

<sup>9</sup> <https://portal.hhs.se/StudentSupport/ITSupport/Pages/default.aspx>

<sup>10</sup> See [www.sasse.se](http://www.sasse.se)

cover accidents outside the SSE premises, and the travel insurance is valid only for the travels organized by the school.

Please see more information on SSE Portal/Employment

## 2 OVERVIEW OF THE SSE DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

SSE provides three Doctoral Programs: the Doctor of Philosophy programs in Business Administration, Economics, and Finance, which are presented below.

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE SSE DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

An overall aim of the Doctor of Philosophy programs in Business Administration, Economics, and Finance is to give students deep and broad theoretical knowledge in their subjects, including training and skills in research methodology and experience of practical research. After completing courses and conducting independent research for the dissertation under the guidance of one or more supervisors, the student will become a critical and autonomous researcher/analyst with the ability to plan, lead, finalize and publish research projects.

The SSE PhD Programs provide a full-time education in English towards a PhD degree (240 ECTS). Under special circumstances, a student may leave the program with a Licentiate degree after completing at least half the program (120 ECTS credits).

Since studies are full-time, students must ensure that any other commitments will not interfere with fulfilling the program's obligations.

All programs begin with orientation days. The orientation days are intended not only to welcome new students but also to provide newcomers with an overview of SSE as an institution of higher education and to help all students understand what to expect from their studies and what SSE expects of them as well as learn more about their opportunities for the future.

#### 2.1.1 Governance of SSE Doctoral Programs

The governance and management of SSE Doctoral Programs are conducted primarily through the following decision-making bodies and positions:

##### 2.1.1.1 Faculty & Program Board (FPB)

The Faculty & Program Board consists of the following delegates:

- The President (chair)
- All SSE Heads of Department
- Two SASSE Student Representatives
- The Associate Dean for each of the following four program levels: BSc, MSc, MBA, and PhD
- Two faculty representatives appointed by the Faculty Forum
- Anyone coopted to the meeting by the President (e.g., the Vice President, Senior Executive Vice President, Director of Communications, HR Director, CEO of IFL, etc.).

The Faculty and Program Board decides on the following matters: education issues, recruitment and promotion issues, equality issues, and scholarship and award issues.

### **2.1.1.2 Associate Dean, Doctoral Programs**

The Associate Dean is responsible for the overall quality, content, and development of the Doctoral Programs.

### **2.1.1.3 PhD Program Committee**

The PhD Program Committee consists of the following delegates:

- Associate Dean, Doctoral Programs
- Program Directors for PhD Programs in Business Administration, Economics and Finance
- Two PhD student representatives
- PhD Program Coordinator (adjunct member)

The PhD Program Committee advises the PhD Associate Dean and Program Directors. It also serves to coordinate and consolidate decisions taken on policies within and across the Doctoral Programs.

### **2.1.1.4 Program Directors**

Program Directors are responsible for educational programs on any of the school's program levels. Within the framework provided by the Faculty and Program Board, Program Directors are responsible for the content, quality, and budget of their programs.

### **2.1.1.5 Student Influence**

The Student Association at SSE (SASSE) is represented in all decision-making bodies at SSE.

## **2.2 DESIGN AND CONTENT OF THE PHD PROGRAMS**

The Doctoral Programs consist of a course component and a dissertation component. At the end of his/her studies, the Doctoral student must have acquired adequate insights and general knowledge within his/her subject area, especially regarding fundamental issues and previous research. The student must also have achieved in-depth subject knowledge that is relevant to his/her dissertation work.

### **2.2.1 The Course Component**

The course component consists of basic theory and methodology as well as courses that provide in-depth knowledge within the student's own research area or adjacent fields of the business administration or economic sciences.

Each PhD Program has several compulsory courses. Information about courses in each program is made available to PhD students every semester through the SSE Portal.

## 2.2.2 The Dissertation Component

In the dissertation component, the PhD student will present his/her own research in the dissertation.

There are two types of dissertations, the monographic dissertation and the consolidated dissertation. The monographic dissertation consists of one coherent paper containing a defined scientific problem treated in a comprehensive way. The consolidated dissertation consists of a summary and a collection of different scientific papers treating problems in one or several subject fields (see Section 3.9.1).

## 3 SSE ACADEMIC REGULATIONS

*This is an unofficial English translation of the SSE academic regulations for the Doctoral Programs. The translation is for informational purposes only and has been prepared solely for the convenience of students, faculty and other interested parties who do not read Swedish. The only official and binding version of the academic regulations for the SSE PhD Programs is the Swedish version issued on September 23, 2013.*

### 3.1 PROGRAM RULES AND REGULATIONS

The rights and obligations of doctoral students in the doctoral programs at the Stockholm School of Economics, the SSE PhD Programs<sup>11</sup>, are formulated below. These regulations govern the relationship between SSE<sup>12</sup> and its doctoral students.

#### 3.1.1 Name of Degree

The Stockholm School of Economics awards two degrees within the Doctoral Programs: a doctoral degree (“Ekonomie doktor”), translated into English as Doctor of Philosophy, Ph.D.; and a licentiate degree (“Ekonomie licentiat”), translated into English as Licentiate of Philosophy, Ph.Lic.

#### 3.1.2 Degree Requirements

In order to receive an SSE Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree, students must earn 240 ECTS credits.<sup>13</sup> These credits consist of a course component, including both basic theory and methodology courses as well as courses that provide in-depth knowledge within the student’s own research area or adjacent fields of the business administration or economic sciences, and a doctoral dissertation component. In the dissertation component, the PhD student will present his/her own research in the dissertation. Degree requirements for each program are described below.

Once a student has fulfilled all the requirements for the program within which he/she is enrolled, the student is eligible to receive a PhD degree certificate (see Section 3.12).

Under certain circumstances (see Section 3.11), a student may leave the PhD program with a Licentiate degree after completing at least half the program (120 ECTS credits).

##### 3.1.2.1 Degree Requirements for the PhD in Business Administration

Within the PhD program in Business Administration, the course component comprises 90 ECTS credits and the dissertation component 150 ECTS credits for student admitted on or after July 1, 2007. For students admitted before June 30, 2007 the course component and the dissertation component comprise 120 ECTS credits each, for a total of 240 ECTS. The PhD student should

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<sup>11</sup> The doctoral programs at the Stockholm School of Economics are called SSE PhD Programs.

<sup>12</sup> The Swedish name of the university, “Handelshögskolan i Stockholm” and its abbreviation “HHS”, is translated into English as “Stockholm School of Economics”, and abbreviated as “SSE” throughout this document.

<sup>13</sup> European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System; ECTS corresponds to the Swedish term “högskolepoäng”.

take the compulsory courses during the first year and specialization courses during the second year. During the first two years of the program, the student should formulate a subject for the dissertation.

### **3.1.2.2 Degree Requirements for the PhD in Economics or Finance**

Within the PhD program in Economics or Finance, the course component comprises 105 ECTS credits and the dissertation component 135 ECTS credits. The PhD student should take compulsory courses during the first year and specialization courses during the second year.

### **3.1.2.3 Degree Requirements for the Licentiate in Business Administration**

A Licentiate of Philosophy degree in Business Administration comprises 120 ECTS credits, where the course component and the dissertation component consist of 60 ECTS credits each.

### **3.1.2.4 Degree Requirements for the Licentiate in Economics or Finance**

A Licentiate of Philosophy degree in Economics or Finance comprises 120 ECTS credits: 52 ECTS for the course component and 68 ECTS credits for the dissertation component.

## **3.2 FUNDING AGREEMENT**

Once the doctoral student has been accepted to the PhD Program, a funding agreement should be established between the student and his/her Department. This agreement should stipulate how the doctoral student is to be funded for the entire duration of his/her studies. The funding agreement is signed by the Head of Department, or the Program Director if the Head has delegated responsibility to the Program Director.

The funding is conditional upon the doctoral student making progress through his/her program during a reasonably continuous and limited period of time. Doctoral Programs at SSE are expected to take four years of full-time study (240 ECTS) for completion.

Delayed studies may have consequences for the student's funding. The doctoral student should without delay report any illness or other condition that affects his/her rate of study to the SSE Personnel Department, his/her (primary) supervisor, and the Head of Department/Program Director. Long interruptions in the course of study may result in termination of funding even if all the years specified in the contract have not been completed.

### **3.2.1 Funding for Regularly Financed Doctoral Students**

Regularly financed doctoral students have guaranteed funding from SSE's own funds earmarked for doctoral study, and receive a tax-exempt scholarship ("stipendium" in Swedish) for 24 months. The subsequent 24 months of scholarship or salary is guaranteed by the Department. The Head of Department/Program Director may decide to extend the scholarship or salary if the student has conducted administrative, research and/or teaching assistance at the Department during his/her PhD studies.



However, the doctoral student is guaranteed access to infrastructure (a workplace; IT/copying/printing, etc.; a PC) for up to 60 months.

In case of parental leave or serious illness lasting longer than four weeks, the above specified time periods (monthly pay and infrastructure) are extended accordingly, so-called clock stoppers. To stop the clock the student should immediately contact his/her Head of Department/Program Director and the Personnel Department. Sick leave pay and parental leave pay are paid in accordance with the rules and regulations at SSE.

### 3.2.2 Externally Funded Extra-Chair Doctoral Students

Some doctoral students are admitted as externally funded, extra-chair doctoral students. Such students are admitted with a salary or scholarship provided by an external source, which remains wholly responsible for such funds. In the event that this funding stops for any reason, the SSE PhD Programs guarantees no further funding. All matters regarding the monthly payment should be directed to the external source of funding.

Costs for infrastructure (a workplace; IT/copying/printing, etc.; a PC) are covered by contracts between SSE Doctoral Programs, the Department and the external source, for as long as the student is in the Doctoral Program.

Parental leave or serious illness should be reported immediately to the doctoral student's (primary) supervisor and the Head of Department/Program Director. SSE is not responsible for sick leave pay or parental leave pay as this responsibility rests fully with the external source of funding.

## 3.3 PERIOD OF STUDY AND STUDY PACE

The Doctoral Program comprises 240 ECTS credits, the equivalent of four years of full-time study, where 1.5 credits equal one week of full-time study during the academic year.

The doctoral student is expected to study on a full-time basis. Part-time study for a limited period may be approved through an agreement between the doctoral student, the primary supervisor, and the respective department/program.

For the doctoral student to be entitled to continued supervision, funding, a workplace, and equipment from the Department, he/she must follow an Individual Study Plan (see Section 3.4 below) and achieve the results stipulated therein. If the student does not achieve an approved rate of study, resources may be reduced and the student may be considered for deregistration from the program by his/her Head of Department/Program Director (see Section 3.13).

## 3.4 INDIVIDUAL STUDY PLAN

The Individual Study Plan incorporates information about the student's activities in the preceding year and his/her remaining courses and details of interim targets that should be achieved in his/her dissertation work in the upcoming year.

An Individual Study Plan is to be submitted by all doctoral students once a year in the spring semester and should be updated in conjunction with the planning and evaluation discussion between the doctoral student and his/her (primary) supervisor. The Individual Study Plan must be approved by the Head of Department (for PhD in Business Administration) or Program Director (for PhD in Economics or Finance).

## 3.5 SUPERVISION

Supervision is one of the most important aspects of the SSE doctoral education.

A doctoral student should have access to his/her (primary) supervisor for the equivalent of 2.5% of a professor's working hours, or roughly one full hour per week over a longer time span.

Supervision is normally needed during the stipulated study period of four full-time academic years, and extended to compensate for periods of parental or sick leave ("clock-stoppers") or periods of administrative, research and/or teaching assistance at the Department.

### 3.5.1 Supervisors

#### 3.5.1.1 Supervisors for the PhD in Business Administration

Within the PhD program in Business Administration, a **primary supervisor** is appointed by the Head of Department for each PhD student upon his/her admission to the program. This primary supervisor should be a professor or associate professor at SSE.

About two years after admission of the PhD student, a **supervision committee** consisting of three to four members suggested by the primary supervisor and including the latter, is appointed by the Head of Department in conjunction with the submission and approval of the student's dissertation plan (see Section 3.9.2).

#### 3.5.1.2 Supervisors for the PhD in Economics or Finance

Within the PhD program in Economics or Finance, the Program Director initially acts as a **supervisor** for the entering PhD student and is the student's contact person as regards the student's Individual Study Plan, rate of study, and deregistration.

A **primary supervisor** is appointed towards the end of the PhD student's second year of study, once the student has decided the subject for the dissertation. The primary supervisor should be a professor or associate professor at SSE. **Assistant supervisors** may also be appointed.

### 3.5.2 Role of the Supervisors

It is incumbent upon those appointed as supervisor, primary supervisor, or assistant supervisor, to follow the doctoral student's studies and his/her dissertation work and to act as a support for the student for the duration of his/her studies. This includes being available for regular meetings with the doctoral student, giving him/her feedback on draft manuscripts, and attending presentations given by the doctoral student at seminars, etc.

It is the duty of the primary supervisor to assess whether the doctoral student is making satisfactory progress. If the primary supervisor deems that the student has little chance of achieving the doctoral degree within a reasonable amount of time, the supervisor can suggest that the student change the objective from a Doctoral degree to a Licentiate degree in order to avoid the risk of deregistration without a degree (see Sections 3.11 and 3.13).

The supervision committee for the student in Business Administration serves to advise the student on his/her dissertation work. The committee should meet with the doctoral student, preferably two to four times a year, and discuss written material presented by the doctoral student relating to his/her dissertation. The doctoral student is expected to regularly inform the supervision committee on progress. The supervision committee also assesses whether the student's Doctoral or Licentiate dissertation is ready for submission for public defense.

### 3.5.3 Change of Supervisor(s)

Should the doctoral student wish to change his/her supervisor(s) during his/her studies, the issue is to be primarily dealt with by the Head of Department (PhD in Business Administration) or Program Director (PhD in Economics and PhD in Finance), who must also appoint the replacement(s).

If the Head of Department or Program Director cannot resolve the matter, the doctoral student may also wish to discuss the issue of a possible change of supervisor with the Associate Dean of the SSE Doctoral Programs.

However, a change of supervisor can only occur provided there is a new supervisor willing to serve in that capacity.

## 3.6 DOCTORAL STUDENT OMBUDSMAN

A Doctoral Student Ombudsman (“doktorandombudsman”) has been appointed by the Faculty and Program Board. The main duty of the ombudsman is to provide advice that helps to eliminate communication problems between the doctoral student and his/her supervisor(s). The ombudsman can also act as an informal sounding board for the doctoral student. Contact details of the Doctoral Student Ombudsman can be found on the SSE Portal.

## 3.7 RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR COURSES

### 3.7.1 Courses for the PhD in Business Administration

Upon starting the PhD program, the PhD student in Business Administration is automatically registered for the compulsory courses offered in the first semester (SUBS, the Stockholm-Uppsala Business Studies program). However, the student must register for all subsequent courses via the SSE Portal.

Should a PhD student wish to take any doctoral courses offered by other universities, this must first be approved by his/her primary supervisor to ensure the suitability of the course as well as financing of any possible course fees.

Course credits for PhD courses offered outside SSE are not automatically registered in the reporting system on the PhD level but registered by the PhD Administrator in Business Administration. For other PhD courses, a course credit certificate with the name of the course, the name and title of the course director, the number of ECTS credits, the date of issue of the certificate, and a course description is required. It is the PhD student's responsibility to check that he/she has received such a certificate for each course successfully completed and to provide a copy of the course certificate to the PhD Administrator for registration of the course credits.

All course credit certificate copies for non-SSE elective courses must be signed and endorsed by the PhD student's primary supervisor before they are submitted to the Program Administrator. All such course credits must also be approved by the Program Director.

Course grades for courses at SSE or at another institution taken by a PhD student in the program in Business Administration are either "Pass" or "Fail".

### 3.7.2 Courses for the PhD in Economics or Finance

The PhD student in Economics or Finance is automatically registered for the compulsory courses in the first semester on starting the PhD program (SDPE, Stockholm Doctoral Course Program in Economics, Econometrics and Finance). However, the student must register for all subsequent courses via the SSE Portal.

Should a PhD student in Economics wish to take any doctoral courses offered by other universities outside the SDPE Collaboration and Uppsala University, he/she must first consult his/her primary supervisor to ensure the suitability of the course as well as financing of any possible course fees. All such course credits must be approved by the Program Director.

Course credits for PhD courses offered under the SDPE Collaboration are registered automatically by the PhD Administrator. For other PhD courses, a course credit certificate with the name of the course, the name and title of the course director, the number of ECTS credits, the date of issue of the certificate, and a course description is required. It is the PhD student's responsibility to check that he/she has received such a certificate for each course successfully completed and to provide a copy of the course certificate to the PhD Administrator for registration of the course credits.

All course credit certificate copies for non-SSE elective courses must be signed and endorsed by the PhD student's primary supervisor before they are submitted to the Program Administrator. All such course credits must also be approved by the Program Director.

Course grades for courses taken by a PhD student in the program in Economics or Finance are either "Pass with Distinction", "Pass" or "Fail", although only a grade of "Pass" or "Fail" is given for all courses transferred from other programs.

## 3.8 RESEARCH TRAVELS

### 3.8.1 Study Abroad

Doctoral students are encouraged to do some research at another university outside Sweden, for a maximum of one year. Any research trip to be undertaken by the doctoral student must be approved by his/her primary supervisor. When the doctoral student, in consultation with his/her

primary supervisor, has decided on the timing and the duration of the research trip and the host university, this must be confirmed by the Program Director.

SSE announces travel scholarships for longer research stays four times a year, administered by the Scholarship Task Force. Scholarships must be sought in advance for travel costs.<sup>14</sup>

### 3.8.2 Conferences

Doctoral students are encouraged to attend relevant conferences in their field and to submit and present papers at them. Conference participation should be planned in consultation with the primary supervisor. SSE Doctoral Programs do not count conference participation as course credit.

SSE announces travel scholarships for conference travel four times a year, administered by the Scholarship Task Force. Travel scholarships are only provided if the student is presenting a paper at the conference. Travel scholarships must be sought in advance.<sup>15</sup>

## 3.9 THE DISSERTATION

The requirements for a dissertation follow three principles. First, the problem must be relevant to the subject area. Second, methodological competency is required. In practice, this means that the methodological knowledge gained from the course component of the Doctoral Program must be put to good use although dissertation work can also be oriented towards method development. Third, the findings in the dissertation must have a certain degree of originality.

### 3.9.1 Types of Dissertations

The dissertation is to be written in either English or Swedish. Dissertations written in Swedish must contain a summary in English.

There are two types of dissertations: the monographic dissertation and the consolidated dissertation.

The dissertation component differs between programs, but within a program the required ECTS are the same for both types of dissertations (see below).

#### The Monographic Dissertation

The monographic dissertation consists of one coherent paper containing a defined scientific problem treated in a comprehensive way.

#### The Consolidated Dissertation

##### **Business Administration**

1. The PhD dissertation is equivalent to 150 ECTS or 2.50 years of full-time work.

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<sup>14</sup> Scholarship information is available on: <http://intern.hhs.se/stipendier/>

<sup>15</sup> Scholarship information is available on: <http://intern.hhs.se/stipendier/>

2. The dissertation should consist of the equivalent of three single-authored publishable papers plus an extended discussion, including synthesis and conclusions.

### **Economics and Finance**

1. The PhD dissertation is equivalent to 135 ECTS or 2.25 years of full-time work.
2. The dissertation should consist of the equivalent of three single-authored publishable papers plus a short summary.

It is the supervisors that make the judgment that the dissertation has reached the level of what is considered a PhD.

The decision to bring a dissertation to open defense is made by the Faculty and Program Board.

Ultimately, the Assessment Committee, as appointed by the Faculty and Program Board, decides to approve or not approve the dissertation.

## **3.9.2 The Dissertation Plan**

### **3.9.2.1 The Dissertation Plan for the PhD in Business Administration**

The PhD student in Business Administration is encouraged to continuously develop the ideas expressed in the Description of Research Project submitted with the application to the program even prior to the actual submission of the dissertation plan.

The PhD student should, normally after about two years and with the approval of the primary supervisor, submit his/her dissertation plan for review at a seminar. The dissertation plan should outline the research purpose, problem formulation, presentation of the theoretical background, methodological considerations, research techniques deemed appropriate, discussion of the theoretical and practical significance of the possible research findings, and a general timetable and work plan. The dissertation plan is subject to approval by the Head of Department. In conjunction with the approval of the dissertation plan, a supervision committee for the doctoral student is appointed by the Head of Department (see Section 3.5.1.1).

### **3.9.2.2. The Dissertation Plan for the PhD in Economics or Finance**

Before the third year of the PhD Program in Economics or Finance, the student should submit a dissertation plan, which presents the chosen subject and a preliminary time plan for the work. Thereafter, the student should make a detailed plan for both his/her dissertation work and other work within the PhD Program, in consultation with his/her primary supervisor.

### 3.9.3 Printing of the Doctoral Dissertation

SSE has a house style for the publication of its doctoral dissertations. About six months before a doctoral student expects to defend his/her dissertation, he/she should contact the Research Office for information on the printing process and the document templates to be used.<sup>16</sup>

## 3.10 RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION DEFENSE

### 3.10.1 Prerequisites for the Dissertation Defense

#### 3.10.1.1 Completed Course Component

A doctoral student must have fulfilled his/her course component requirement before the dissertation defense can be scheduled (see sections 3.1.2.1 and 3.1.2.2 for total credits required). An official course transcript showing that the student has fulfilled the course component requirement should be provided by the program administrator.

#### 3.10.1.2 Completed Dissertation Component

Once the doctoral student has fulfilled the course component requirement, and the doctoral student's primary supervisor and other supervisors deem that the dissertation is ready to be defended, then the dissertation manuscript should be approved in the manner agreed upon by the Department.

### 3.10.2 Motion on Doctoral Defense

Once it has been established that the doctoral student has completed the course component, and the dissertation manuscript has been approved by the student's Department, the Head of Department writes a motion on doctoral defense ("disputationsbrev") addressed to the Faculty and Program Board, containing the following information:

- Name of the doctoral student
- Title of the doctoral dissertation
- Date, time, and place for the doctoral defense
- Name and title of the proposed chair at the public defense
- Name, title, and institutional affiliation of the proposed faculty opponent
- Names, titles, and institutional affiliations of the members of the proposed assessment committee.

At the Faculty and Program Board meeting, the opponent, assessment committee, and chairperson at the doctoral defense, and the date, time, and place for the defense are formally appointed.

Once the Faculty and Program Board has formally approved the defense motion, the SSE President's notification of the defense motion must be posted on the SSE bulletin board no later than three working weeks, including any examination weeks, before the defense is to take place.

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<sup>16</sup> <https://portal.hhs.se/Research/Dissertations/Pages/DissertationsForthePhDCandidate.aspx>

### 3.10.3 Scheduling of the Defense

The defense must take place during the academic year unless the President, in consultation with the Faculty and Program Board, decides otherwise.

The primary supervisor and the doctoral student agree about alternatives for dates for the public defense, and the primary supervisor finalizes the date and time for the public defense with the proposed faculty opponent and the assessment committee. The date and time for the defense is booked at the Office of Academic Affairs. Only one public defense of a doctoral dissertation can occur at the same time at SSE. The doctoral student or the department books the venue for the public defense.

In scheduling the defense, the three weeks needed for the public display of the published dissertation should be included (“spikning”, see Section 3.10.5).

### 3.10.4 The Chairperson at the Defense

The Faculty and Program Board appoints the chairperson at the defense, who is a professor, or if deemed appropriate, an associate professor at SSE. The chair at the defense is usually the primary supervisor of the doctoral student.

### 3.10.5 The Opponent and the Assessment Committee

At least three working weeks before the defense, the Faculty and Program Board will appoint the following:

- One opponent—a professor or associate professor employed in the relevant field.
- An assessment committee to grade the dissertation, consisting of three members who must be professors or associate professors.
  - One should be from the doctoral student’s own department, but not a supervisor.
  - One should be from the teaching or research staff from another university or university college.
  - One should be from another department at SSE, *or* from the teaching or research staff from another university or university college.
  - A chairperson is appointed within the Assessment Committee.

In extenuating circumstances, the Faculty and Program Board may give dispensation from these requirements. Should a member of the assessment committee be unable to attend the defense, the Faculty and Program Board will appoint a replacement.

### 3.10.6 Distribution of the Dissertation

The published version of the dissertation should be available at least three working weeks before the defense takes place, and a copy for public scrutiny should be posted on the SSE bulletin board (“spikning”). Although the Re-examination period in August is not part of the academic year, it may be counted towards the three-week “spikning” period for those defenses taking place early in the Fall Semester.



The dissertation, together with details regarding the date, time, and place of the defense, should be sent to every Swedish university or university college department that runs doctoral programs in the same field of study.

The Research Office has information on the “spikning” and the distribution of the dissertation.<sup>17</sup>

SSE Doctoral dissertations are published on DiVA Digitala Vetenskapliga Arkivet (Academic Archive On-line)<sup>18</sup> after the defense. The Research Office should be contacted for any questions regarding publication and copyright issues.

### 3.10.7 Day of the Defense

The opponent and all the members of the assessment committee must be present at the defense.

The Doctoral student, called the “respondent” during the defense, must defend his/her dissertation orally at the defense. During the defense, the opponent must comment on the dissertation, and the respondent must respond to those comments. Thereafter, anyone present at the defense is entitled to comment and pose questions regarding the dissertation in an order determined by the chairperson at the defense, and the respondent should respond to the questions and comments.

After the conclusion of the defense act, the assessment committee withdraws to deliberate on the grade for the dissertation.

### 3.10.8 Grading of the Dissertation

The assessment committee is quorate when all members are present. The majority opinion of the committee constitutes its decision as regards proposing which grade (“Pass” or “Fail”) to award. If the number of votes is equal, the chairperson has the casting vote. The grade, as recorded on the formal “Record of the Assessment Committee for Doctoral Dissertation” (“disputationsprotokollet”)<sup>19</sup>, must be accompanied by a “Statement of the Assessment Committee” (“utlåtandet”), a written explanation of the outcome and the issues raised at the defense.<sup>20</sup> The opponent is entitled to be present and participate in the assessment committee’s deliberations, but he/she may not take part in the committee’s decision-making.

The dissertation is awarded either a “Pass” or a “Fail” grade by the assessment committee. In awarding a grade, the assessment committee pays attention to both the content of the dissertation and how it has been publicly defended by the respondent. The “Record of the Assessment Committee for Doctoral Dissertation” and the written “Statement of the Assessment Committee” are reported to the Faculty and Program Board.

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<sup>17</sup> <https://portal.hhs.se/Research/Dissertations/Pages/DissertationsForthePhDCandidate.aspx>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/search.jsf>

<sup>19</sup> “Record of the Assessment Committee for PhD Dissertation”, available at <http://intern.hhs.se/RektorsKansli/RecordAssessmentCommittee.doc>

<sup>20</sup> “Statement of the Assessment Committee”, available at <http://intern.hhs.se/RektorsKansli/StatementAssessmentCommittee.docx>

### 3.11 RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE LICENTIATE DISSERTATION SEMINAR

If the primary supervisor makes the assessment that the doctoral student has little chance of achieving the established end-objective, i.e., the doctoral degree, within a reasonable amount of time, the supervisor must immediately discuss the issue with the student. Should the student run the risk of deregistration from the program (see Section 3.13 below), the supervisor can suggest that the student change the objective from a Doctoral degree to a Licentiate degree.

#### 3.11.1 Rules Governing the Licentiate Dissertation Seminar

The Faculty and Program Board decides on the presentation of the licentiate dissertation at an open seminar. The licentiate seminar must take place during the academic year at a time and venue determined by the Faculty and Program Board. The time and venue for the seminar will be posted on the School bulletin board or be publicized in some other way at least three working weeks in advance.

#### 3.11.2 The Chairperson and the Opponent

The Faculty and Program Board appoints a chairperson and an opponent for the open seminar at least three working weeks prior to the presentation of the licentiate dissertation at the seminar. A professor, or if deemed appropriate, an associate professor, is appointed as chairperson. The opponent and chairperson must be present at the licentiate dissertation seminar.

#### 3.11.3 Distribution of the Licentiate Dissertation

Students should contact the Research Office for information on the document templates to be used for formatting of the licentiate dissertations.<sup>21</sup> The publishing of licentiate dissertations is, however, not financed by the SSE.

The licentiate dissertation must be available at least three working weeks before the open seminar. An electronic copy of the final version of the dissertation must be available in the SSE Library to allow adequate examination of the licentiate dissertation, and an electronic copy should be sent to those faculty members and other academics working at SSE requesting a copy of the dissertation.

SSE Licentiate dissertations are published on DiVA Digitala Vetenskapliga Arkivet (Academic Archive On-line)<sup>22</sup> after the Licentiate seminar.

#### 3.11.4 Defense Procedure

The doctoral student, called the “respondent” during the defense proceedings, must defend his/her dissertation orally at the open seminar. The opponent comments on the licentiate dissertation at the seminar and the respondent should respond to those comments. Thereafter, anyone present at the seminar is entitled to comment and pose questions regarding the dissertation in an order determined by the chairperson, and the respondent should respond to the questions and comments.

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<sup>21</sup> <https://portal.hhs.se/Research/Dissertations/Pages/DissertationsForthePhDCandidate.aspx>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/search.jsf>

### 3.11.5 Grading of the Licentiate Dissertation

The licentiate dissertation is awarded either a “Pass” or a “Fail” grade by the chairperson of the open seminar. In awarding a grade, attention is paid to both the content of the licentiate dissertation and how it has been defended. Results of the defense are to be reported to the Faculty and Program Board.

## 3.12 DEGREE CERTIFICATE

To receive a Doctoral/Licentiate degree, the student must be awarded a “Pass” grade for the doctoral/licentiate dissertation, and fulfill the requirements for the course component for the degree. The Program Coordinator of SSE Doctoral Programs should be notified by the Program Administrator when the course credit requirements have been fulfilled by the student. If the doctoral student has met the requirements for the course component and the dissertation component, the Doctoral/Licentiate degree certificate can be prepared and issued.

## 3.13 DEREGISTRATION WITHOUT A DEGREE

### 3.13.1 Deregistration

If the primary supervisor makes the assessment that the doctoral student has little chance of achieving the established end-objective, i.e., the doctoral degree, within a reasonable amount of time, the supervisor must immediately discuss the issue with the student. The supervisor must clarify in writing the measures that can be taken to improve the student’s chances of achieving the end-objective and provide an action plan or change the objective from a Doctoral degree to a Licentiate degree. Alternatively, the supervisor may recommend the student to finish his/her studies without graduating. If a supervision committee has been appointed, the primary supervisor should also inform the other committee members of the discussion and consult with them. The conditions for deregistration must be considered during the discussion as well as the issue of to what extent the supervisor or someone else can help the doctoral student to transfer to some other activity.

A doctoral student accepted into the Doctoral Program can be deregistered:

- If he/she does not earn at least 30 ECTS credits per academic year, which may comprise either courses within the Doctoral Program or dissertation work. Interruption of studies or reported sickness or parental leave must be taken into consideration.
- If he/she is no longer deemed to have the capacity required to complete the Doctoral Program. This assessment is made jointly by the primary supervisor and Head of Department.
- If there is no one among the School’s faculty who is willing to be the student’s primary supervisor.
- If he/she does not fulfill his/her obligations in accordance with individualized agreements as spelled out in the individual study plan approved by the primary supervisor concerning study achievements or the equivalent.
- If the student personally requests to be deregistered.
- If the student breaks the School’s disciplinary rules.

Decisions on deregistration may, in exceptional circumstances, be precluded even though the conditions for deregistration have been met.

Decisions on deregistration are to be taken by the relevant Head of Department. The doctoral student may, unless he/she has personally requested to be deregistered, appeal the Head of Department's decision by writing to the Associate Dean of the SSE PhD Programs. The decision of the Associate Dean is final and may not be appealed.

### 3.13.2 Deregistration from the Doctoral Program (for MSc-PhD Parallel Enrollment)

Some SSE master students are admitted into the SSE Doctoral Program in the second year of their MSc studies, through MSc-PhD parallel enrollment. When admitted to the PhD program, the MSc student begins in the PhD program the following fall semester instead of continuing his/her second year studies within the MSc program.

An MSc-PhD student, who wishes to leave the PhD Program and to revert to MSc studies, may only count the PhD courses of 30 ECTS credits that are specified as elective courses in the MSc program towards the MSc degree course requirement. For further information see the Student Handbook for the Master of Science Programs.<sup>23</sup>

## 3.14 ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

SSE has a strict policy on academic conduct, which is formally regulated by the [Disciplinary Regulations](#).<sup>24</sup>

## 3.15 OTHER REGULATIONS

- The student pledges to commit no copyright infringement by making copies of works protected by copyright or making such works available to the public.
- The first time the student logs in to the SSE Portal, he/she accepts the terms of the IT agreement in effect at SSE.
- The Stockholm School of Economics, Handelshögskolan i Stockholm and Handelshögskolan, SSE, and HHS are important and valuable Trademarks and Trade names of the Stockholm School of Economics. These distinctive signs, and other registered trademarks of Stockholm School of Economics, may under no circumstances be used in connection with personal e-mail mailings, as an address on Facebook, or in other similar contexts in a way that suggests that the use is authorized by the Stockholm School of Economics.
- The student allows SSE to convey his/her contact information to a third party. This is done very restrictively and mainly applies to recruitment and surveys and similar measures where the aim is to provide information useful to society. When requested by a third party

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<sup>23</sup> Available at <http://www.hhs.se/Education/Pages/Student-Handbook.aspx>.

<sup>24</sup> <https://portal.hhs.se/StudentSupport/Documents/DisciplinaryRegulations.pdf> (login is required in order to access the document).

to provide information on an SSE student (current or former), SSE will only confirm whether a student is or has been enrolled and the dates for that enrollment.

## APPENDIX 1: LINKS

[Disciplinary Regulations](#)<sup>25</sup>

[Guidelines for Providing Support for People with Special Needs](#)

[Equal Treatment of Students Policy 2011](#)

[Guidelines for Handling Information about Students with Respect to External Parties – the Bachelor’s, Master’s and PhD Programs in Stockholm](#) (in Swedish)

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<sup>25</sup> Please note that the login is required in order to access the link.

## APPENDIX 2: STUDENT PLEDGE

### PLEDGE

By accepting admission as a student in the Doctoral Program in [Enter name of the Doctoral Program] at the Stockholm School of Economics (240 ECTS credits), as decided by the Stockholm School of Economics' Admissions Board, I hereby pledge:

- to accept and follow the SSE regulations stipulated in the Student Handbook for the program as determined by the authorized School body,
- to respect the disciplinary regulations adopted for the program and accept the consequences that may arise should I infringe upon these regulations, as determined by the authorized School body,
- in using shared resources such as the library and IT, to follow the stipulated regulations and not infringe or abet in any infringement upon the intellectual property rights of others,
- to submit for inspection, when available, my original degree certificates for the Bachelor and Master degrees, in both the original language and an official English translation (if the original language is something other than Swedish or English), if the degree certificates were not ready at the time of application to the Doctoral Program. I assure that all documents submitted in connection with my admission are valid and accurate,
- to otherwise conduct my studies with respect for my fellow students, teachers, and other staff members, and to act towards others in such a way as to uphold and promote the reputation of the Stockholm School of Economics.

Stockholm, August 20\_\_

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Signature

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Name (printed)

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Swedish personal identity number (or date of birth YYYY-MM-DD)