

Department of Business Law

General Syllabus for Third-Cycle Studies in Business Law for the Degree of Doctor of Laws and Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Lund University School of Economics and Management

The syllabus was adopted by the Board of the School of Economics and Management on June 30th, 2016, revised October 19th, 2018; May 18th, 2022; and June 17th, 2025.

Replaces an earlier syllabus with reg. no U 2022/3845. See also [Guidelines for third-cycle studies at the School of Economics and Management](#), reg. no STYR 2025/654.

Third-cycle studies are offered to the extent that available resources allow.

1 Description of the third-cycle subject area

Business Law is a subject within law that focuses on the judicial regulation of commercial relations of significance to companies, organisations and public authorities. Research in business law analyses the legal framework and the way in which the law is applied to enterprise in the broad sense, what that looks like, and what it ought to look like at various levels of society. Subjects for research include company law, labour law, contract law, intellectual property, competition law, market law, environmental law and tax law. Legal developments within the European Union and the internationalisation of law are often of great significance.

2 Aim of the programme and learning outcomes

The third-cycle programme in Business Law aims to provide the doctoral student with in-depth knowledge of the subject, comprehensive training in research methods and good insights into the problems that arise within research and its practical application, which are to serve to facilitate autonomous research.

Knowledge and understanding

For the Degree of Doctor the doctoral student is to

- 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 doctoral student is to

- demonstrate the capacity for scholarly 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 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 their 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 doctoral student is to

- 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.

The doctoral programme in Business Law leads to a Doctor of Laws degree or a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Business Law, see 3.2, 3.3 and 7.

3 Admission requirements

3.1. General admission requirements

An applicant meets the general admission requirements for third-cycle studies they have obtained a second-cycle degree, completed at least 240 credits, including at least 60 second-cycle credits, or have acquired equivalent knowledge in some other way, in Sweden or abroad. (Higher Education Ordinance Chapter 7 Section 39).

3.2. Specific admission requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Laws

An applicant is eligible to be admitted to the third-cycle programme in Business Law for the degree of Degree of Doctor of Laws, if they meet both the general admission

requirements and the specific admission requirements. An applicant meets the specific admission requirements if they have completed a Degree of Master of Laws, Bachelor of Jurisprudence or equivalent. An applicant also meets the specific admission requirements if they hold another completed degree or have specific professional experience, provided it (a) is deemed to demonstrate competence in the subject at third-cycle level, and (b) is equivalent to the Degree of Master of Laws or Bachelor of Jurisprudence in terms of both knowledge and general legal education relevant to the subject of the third-cycle programme.

3.3. Specific admission requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

An applicant is eligible to be admitted to the third-cycle programme in Business Law for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, if they meet both the general admission requirements and the specific admission requirements. An applicant meets the specific admission requirements if they have completed a one-year second-cycle programme in jurisprudence. An applicant also meets the specific requirements if they hold another completed degree or have specific professional experience, provided it (a) is deemed to demonstrate competence in the subject at third-cycle level, and (b) is equivalent to the said second-cycle programme in terms of both knowledge and general legal education relevant to the subject of the third-cycle programme.

4 Programme structure and content

4.1 Programme design

Third-cycle studies in business law consist of 240 credits (four years of full-time study). The main component of the programme concerns the writing of an academic thesis (doctoral thesis), which is the equivalent of 210 credits. Courses within the programme correspond to 30 credits.

4.2 Programme content

4.2.1. Courses and other components

The third-cycle programme includes courses totalling 30 credits.

The director of third-cycle studies at the Department of Business Law can decide that a doctoral student may transfer credits from second or third-cycle courses at other departments within Lund University or other higher education institutions. An introductory theory course in jurisprudence consisting of 15 credits is *compulsory* and is always included in the course package. An exemption may be granted by the director of third-cycle studies in cases where the doctoral student has acquired equivalent knowledge by other means. A course in research ethics worth 3 credits is also *compulsory*.

Doctoral students at the Department of Business Law may study jurisprudence and business law at a seminar-based graduate school for 12 credits. Within this framework, each participant is to regularly submit an original text as the basis for a seminar.

4.2.2 Seminars

The doctoral student is to present their work in seminars. The first of them is to take place during the doctoral student's first year on the programme and is to be a research proposal seminar. For doctoral students intending to obtain the Degree of Doctor, a midway seminar is to be conducted after half the study period has passed.

Before a doctoral student submits their thesis for public defense, the Department of Business Law is to arrange an open concluding seminar in which the doctoral student, as part of their third-cycle education, is to orally defend a draft of the thesis manuscript. The thesis manuscript is to be reviewed by senior researchers. A senior researcher with their main engagement at another higher education institution is to participate in either the midway seminar or concluding seminar at the request of the head of department, and to offer comments on the thesis manuscript.

5 Teaching and examination

Teaching consists of courses and seminars. Planning of the department's range of courses is undertaken annually, taking into account the resources available both in terms of staff and budget, but also with regard to the number of doctoral students, the nature of the courses, the wishes of supervisors and so on. The teaching is intended to enhance the doctoral students' ability to autonomously complete their theses. As well as organised courses, seminars and guest lectures are also offered.

For the Degree of Doctor, the student must have passed all assessed components included in the programme and the doctoral thesis.

Further information regarding admission and selection to the doctoral programme is available in [Admission Rules for Doctoral Education at Lund University](#) (STYR 2024/288).

Further information regarding individual study plans, supervision, the thesis, public defense and the examining committee is available in [Guidelines for third-cycle studies at the School of Economics and Management](#) (STYR 2025/654).

6 Other

A doctoral student who originally planned to complete their studies with a doctoral degree shall be able to complete their studies with a licentiate degree if the education covers at least 120 credits and otherwise meets the requirements for a licentiate degree.

7 Degree of Doctor of Laws or Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Degree titles: Degree of Doctor of Laws (LL.D.) or Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, (PhD).

The business law research undertaken within the department is largely conducted using jurisprudential methods. It is not uncommon for emphasis to be placed on traditional jurisprudential methods supported by the sources of law and focus on the content of currently applicable law.

Research in business law may sometimes have a broader sociological theme. Such research may involve greater or lesser elements of qualitative or quantitative empirical approaches, or of normative sociological modelling. The research project's specialisation and the doctoral student's choice of methodology determine whether the doctoral student is to obtain a Degree of Doctor of Laws or a Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

When the doctoral student is admitted, or not later than the research proposal seminar, the specialisation for the respective degree should be stated. There will be an opportunity to request a reconsideration, taking into account the development of the thesis. A change of specialisation is decided upon by the head of department in consultation with the doctoral student, supervisors and the research board at the Department of Business Law.

General Syllabus for Third-Cycle Studies in Business Law for the Degree of Licentiate of Laws and the Degree of Licentiate of Philosophy at Lund University School of Economics and Management

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1 Description of the third-cycle subject area

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2 Aim of the programme and learning outcomes

The third-cycle programme in Business Law aims to provide the doctoral student with in-depth knowledge of the subject, comprehensive training in research methods and good insights into the problems that arise within research and its practical application, in order to facilitate autonomous research.

Knowledge and understanding

For a Degree of Licentiate the doctoral student is to

- 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 doctoral student is to

- 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 doctoral student is to

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments of ethical aspects of their 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 their personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for their ongoing learning.

The doctoral programme in Business Law leads to a Doctor of Laws degree or a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Business Law, see 3.2, 3.3 and 6.

3 Admission requirements

3.1. General admission requirements

An applicant meets the general admission requirements for third-cycle studies if they have obtained a second-cycle degree, completed at least 240 credits, including at least 60 second-cycle credits, or have acquired equivalent knowledge in some other way, in Sweden or abroad. (Higher Education Ordinance Chapter 7 Section 39).

3.2. Specific admission requirements for the Degree of Licentiate of Laws

An applicant is eligible to be admitted to the third-cycle programme in Business Law for the Degree of Licentiate of Laws if they meet both the general admission requirements and the specific admission requirements. An applicant meets the specific admission requirements if they have completed a Degree of Master of Laws, Bachelor of Jurisprudence or equivalent. An applicant also meets the specific requirements if they hold another completed degree or have specific professional experience, provided it (a) is deemed to demonstrate competence in the subject at third-cycle level, and (b) is equivalent to the Degree of Master of Laws or Bachelor of Jurisprudence in terms of both knowledge and general legal education relevant to the subject of the third-cycle programme.

3.3. Specific admission requirements for the Degree of Licentiate of Philosophy

An applicant is eligible to be admitted to the third-cycle programme in Business Law for the Degree of Licentiate of Laws if they meet both the general admission requirements and the specific admission requirements. An applicant meets the specific admission

requirements if they have completed a one-year second-cycle programme in jurisprudence. An applicant also meets the specific admission requirements if they hold another completed degree or have specific professional experience, provided it (a) is deemed to demonstrate competence in the subject at third-cycle level, and (b) is equivalent to the Degree of Master of Laws in terms of both knowledge and general legal education relevant to the subject of the third-cycle programme.

4 Programme structure and content

4.1 Programme design

Third-cycle studies in business law consist of 120 credits (two years of full-time study). The main component of the programme concerns the writing of an academic thesis (licentiate thesis), which is the equivalent of 105 credits. Courses within the programme correspond to 15 credits.

4.2 Programme content

4.2.1 Courses and other components

The third-cycle programme includes courses totalling 15 credits.

The director of third-cycle education studies at the Department of Business Law can decide that a doctoral student may transfer credits from second or third-cycle courses at other departments within Lund University or other higher education institutions. An introductory theory course in jurisprudence consisting of 7.5 credits, is *compulsory* and is always included in the course package. An exemption may be granted by the director of third-cycle studies in cases where the doctoral student has acquired equivalent knowledge by other means. A course in research ethics worth 3 higher education credits is also *compulsory*.

Doctoral students at the Department of Business Law may study jurisprudence and business law at a seminar-based graduate school for 4.5 credits. Within this framework, each participant is to regularly submit an original text as the basis for a seminar.

4.2.2 Seminars

The doctoral student is to present their work in seminars. The first of them is to take place during the doctoral student's first year on the programme and is to be a research proposal seminar.

For doctoral students intending to obtain the Degree of Licentiate of laws, an open licentiate seminar is to be held, during which the doctoral student defends their academic paper. A senior researcher with their main engagement at another higher education institution is to oppose the manuscript as a critical reviewer.

5 Teaching and examination

Teaching consists of courses and seminars. Planning of the department's range of courses is undertaken annually, taking into account the resources available both in terms of staff and budget, but also with regard to the number of doctoral students, the nature of the courses, the wishes of supervisors and so on. The teaching is intended to enhance the doctoral students' ability to autonomously complete their theses. As well as organised courses, seminars and guest lectures are also offered.

For the Degree of Licentiate, the student must have passed all the assessed components included in the programme, and the licentiate thesis through the licentiate seminar.

Further information regarding admission and selection to the doctoral programme is available in [Admission Rules for Doctoral Education at Lund University](#) (STYR 2024/288).

Further information regarding individual study plans, supervision, the licentiate thesis, the public seminar and the examiner is available in [Guidelines for third-cycle studies at the School of Economics and Management](#) (STYR 2025/654).

6 Degree of Licentiate of Laws or Degree of Licentiate of Philosophy

Degree titles: Degree of Licentiate of Laws or Degree of Licentiate of Philosophy.

The business law research undertaken within the department is largely conducted using jurisprudential methods. It is not uncommon for emphasis to be placed on traditional jurisprudential methods supported by the sources of law and focus on the content of currently applicable law.

Research in business law may sometimes have a broader sociological theme. Such research may involve greater or lesser elements of qualitative or quantitative empirical approaches, or of normative sociological modelling. The research project's specialisation and the doctoral student's choice of methodology determine whether the doctoral student is to obtain a Degree of Licentiate of Laws or a Degree of Licentiate of Philosophy.

When the doctoral student is admitted, or not later than the research proposal seminar, the specialisation for the respective degree should be stated. There will be an opportunity to request a reconsideration, taking into account the development of the thesis. A change of specialisation is decided upon by the head of department in consultation with the doctoral student, supervisors and the research board at the Department of Business Law.