# Guidelines for Individual Study Plan (ISP)

*Questions, queries, issues, and checklist for the development and follow-up of ISPs*

# Purpose

An Individual Study Plan (ISP) must function as a governing instrument for the entire education period and ensure that the education is both conducted and monitored in an efficient manner. The ISP must stipulate the university's and the doctoral student's commitments as well as a timetable for the doctoral student's education.

Since each doctoral student studies an individual doctoral education, individual plans are needed where they clearly state what the doctoral student is required to undertake and learn, and in what way. Via yearly reflections and updates, the plan is kept relevant and serves as a map for the education and a tool for the supervision.

A well-founded ISP means that all expectations become clear and, thus, that there are good conditions and possibilities for good supervision. It also means that there are good conditions and possibilities to keep to the schedule and that any possible problems are noticed early. The progression in the doctoral education must be monitored regularly so that the qualitative targets are met in time for the public defence of doctoral thesis (or licentiate seminar).

It is the principal supervisor's responsibility to oversee all ISP work.

The purpose of the development and follow-up of the ISP is that the doctoral student and supervisor together shall:

- plan the implementation of courses / modules, seminars, and doctoral thesis,
- create a time frame for the doctoral student's education,
- discuss and monitor the progression of the research and educational activities,
- monitor target/goal fulfilments,
- monitor the research project and activities in relation to the time frame and, if necessary, makes revisions,
- identify any problems and discuss possible alternative arrangements, including informing such measures to the director(s) of studies.

# Contents

An individual study plan (ISP) contains both what is planned and what is implemented as follows:

- Part 1: General information

- Part 2: Overview of studies

- Part 3: Completed studies and follow-up of the previous study plan

- Part 4: Planned studies, courses, and doctoral thesis work for the coming period

- Part 5: The studies' progression, supervision, and plans for forthcoming career after studies

- Part 6: Signatures

# Time frame for the development and follow-up of ISP

The first individual study plan must be written no later than three months after the doctoral student has begun his/her doctoral education. It is then addressed and processed by the doctoral education committee at Halmstad University. The responsibility for establishing an ISP lies with the principal supervisor.

The individual study plan must be monitored every year, regardless of the time frame of study. Follow-up meetings for the doctoral student are to be held every year where the individual study plan is updated. The director of studies is responsible for holding these meetings. The director of studies, the doctoral student's principal supervisor, at least one second supervisor as well as the doctoral student must participate in the annual study follow-up. Please note that during approved leave from studies, ISP follow-ups are not required, however, an updated ISP must be developed and written in connection with the resumption of studies.

Prior to the development and follow-up of the ISP, a reminder function is used in the record keeping system W3D3 which entails sending automated emails to the doctoral students, principal supervisors, as well as the directors of studies with a reminder that the ISP must be devised for decision making. A reminder regarding the completion of the first ISP will be sent out one month after the starting date and a reminder regarding the follow-up of the ISP will be sent out three months before the actual date of the annual follow-up.

# Checklist for the first Individual Study Plan (ISP)

Below is a guide for creating the first individual study plan based on the template for ISP.

## Part 1: General information

- Fill in personal information, school, subject, employment, and employers that are requested.

- Fill in the start date for doctoral education (see admission decision).

- Fill in if the doctoral student has been admitted to a licentiate education, doctoral education, or the later part of the doctoral education (see admission decision). The later part of the doctoral education must be filled in if the doctoral student has been admitted to a licentiate education, taken a licentiate degree, and after that been admitted to a doctoral education.

- Enter, respectively, the credits required for the licentiate degree and doctoral degree, according to the General Syllabus (ASP) on which the doctoral student is studying. See General Study Plans at hh.se.

- Enter the version number of the General Syllabus (ASP).
  Version numbers are found on the general study plan that is relevant at the time of admission. See General Study Plans at hh.se.

- Fill in the name of the director of studies.

- Fill in the name of immediate superior.
  This can be either an immediate superior at the university or an immediate superior where the doctoral student is elsewhere employed.

- Fill in the name and university or alternative organisation for the principal supervisor, second supervisor as well as any mentor, or other people with key roles during the doctoral student's education.

## Part 2: Overview of studies

- Enter any credits obtained whilst undertaking a doctoral education that are registered in Ladok. This information can be found in Ladok. If you need help with this, contact Education Support via forskarladok@hh.se.

- Achieved percentage of the studies; courses and thesis work:
  Enter the estimated percentage and time frame of the studies that have been completed (assume that the completed doctoral degree is 100 percent, and the completed licentiate degree corresponds to 50 percent). NB! This is not expected to appear on a first ISP.

- **Degree of activity/study activity per semester in doctoral education as reported to Ladok:** In most cases, this is not relevant for a first ISP. For more information [click here](#).

- **The ethics of research that involves humans:**
  Indicate, according to the form, if ethical review is relevant or not. If you have more general questions regarding ethical review and personal data in research, you are welcome to contact the [University's Research Ethics Committee](#).

- **Overview of planned completion of studies:**
  Fill in whether the doctoral student plans to take a licentiate degree or doctoral degree and the preliminary date for the licentiate seminar or public defence of thesis.

- **Doctoral thesis/Licentiate thesis:**
  State the format (monograph or compilation thesis) as well as the preliminary title of the doctoral thesis/licentiate thesis as well as a short summary of the research project.

## Part 3: Completed studies and follow-up of the previous study plan

Normally, this part is left blank when creating a first ISP. Should there be already completed activities in the doctoral education, see part 3 under the heading Checklist for the Follow-Up of ISPs.

## Part 4: Planned studies, courses, and doctoral thesis work for the coming period (one year ahead)

- **Reporting of the planned activity in the doctoral education for this ISP period (one year ahead):**
  Indicate the estimated degree of activity (as a percentage: 100% being full-time) for the doctoral student's coming year's doctoral education.

- **Planned doctoral thesis/work with licentiate thesis:**
  Fill in a summary of planned work regarding the doctoral thesis/licentiate thesis. The text must be comprehensive enough to provide an insight into the content of the work.

- **Planned activities/work regarding doctoral thesis:**
  Enter title (preliminary) for publications, seminars, conferences, reports, etc. that will start or are ongoing within the coming ISP period. NB! the planned end-date may fall later than within the ISP period/time frame.

- **Planned mandatory courses:**
  Enter title, credits, and planned end-date of planned mandatory courses according to [the general syllabus](#).

- **Planned optional courses:**
  Enter title, credits, and planned end-date for planned optional courses.

- **Planned examination seminar or equivalent** (e.g., mid-term seminar, Research Proposal (RP) seminar, licentiate seminar, final seminar, public defence of thesis): Enter the name of the activity and the date of planned implementation.

- **Planned departmental duties at the University or work outside the University for this ISP period** (state e.g., administration, teaching or other tasks, state extent in percent): Describe type of work and extent as a percentage of full-time work. For example, if a doctoral student is studying part-time and at the same time working, the extent and content of the work must be stated, regardless of whether the work is linked to the studies or not.

- **Other aspects that will affect the studies**, such as sick leave, parental leave, positions of trust for this ISP period (specify what and time-period, as well as scope in percent): Indicate any other factors that may affect the doctoral studies. In the event of any circumstances that lead to longer breaks from the doctoral studies, it may be relevant to apply for approved leave from studies, see the doctoral student guide.

## Part 5: Progression of studies, supervision, and planning for a career after studies

- **Comments from both the doctoral student and the supervisor(s):**
  It can, of course, be difficult to have had the possibility to form an opinion regarding the progression and supervision of the studies when producing the first ISP. If this is the case, these fields can be left blank.

- **The supervisors' activities that may have an impact on the extent and/or quality of supervision:**
  Enter any activities/change of events, such as leave of absence, sick leave, parental leave, longer visits abroad, positions of trust, change of employment. If these changes of events are expected to affect the scope and quality of the supervision, it must state what measures are taken to ensure that the doctoral student receives adequate supervision.

- **How is the supervision distributed between the principal supervisor and the second supervisor concerning time (and possibly in the distribution of tasks)?**
  Enter hours per supervisor and year, as well as the distribution of tasks if this is relevant.

- **Follow-up appraisal – concerning doctoral education:**
  Not applicable in the first ISP.

- **Career planning after the studies - enter activities:**
  It can be difficult to have had the possibility to discuss this matter when creating the first ISP, if so, this text area can be left blank.

- **What is important for the coming period for this study plan to work?**
  Indicate any factors that may affect or prevent the activities from being carried out within the specified time frame and any priorities that need to be made.

## Part 6: Signatures

- Carefully check the contents and make sure that all parts are filled in correctly. When the individual study plan is considered complete, it needs to be signed by the doctoral student, principal supervisor, and director of studies. It will, then, be sent to the Committee for Doctoral Education who will make their decision.

- The principal supervisor's signature certifies that all supervisors have read and accepted the content of the ISP. Confirmation from the supervisor can be made via e-mail (however, this does not need to be attached to the ISP).

- Following a decision by the Committee for Doctoral Education at Halmstad University, the ISP is signed by the Chairperson of the Committee for Doctoral Education at Halmstad University.

- The signatures are, in most cases, done digitally. For more information, see [Digital signatures - edusign](#).
  Is anyone outside the university sector required to sign the document? If so, the easiest way is to ask them to create an account and log in with an eduID via eduid.se. It is open for anyone to create such an account.

# Examples of questions regarding ISP follow-up

## Part 1-2: General Information and Overview of Studies

- Is all earlier stated information still correct? Update and revise if necessary.

- Is the planned study activity still correct? Revise if necessary.

- Is further ethical review needed?

- Discuss whether the scheduled time for the licentiate seminar and/or public defence of doctoral thesis is reasonable. Revise if necessary. Keep in mind that the licentiate seminar and public defence of doctoral thesis must be registered to the Committee for Doctoral Education at Halmstad University no later than three months in advance.

## Part 3-4 Completed and planned studies

For a degree to be issued, all qualitative targets/degree outcomes must be achieved. The purpose of all activities in which a doctoral student participates should, thus, be to contribute to the doctoral student's learning and that the targets are achieved.

Discuss the different qualitative targets:

- How much time is still required for the doctoral student to reach their respective target(s)?

- Are there targets that have already been met?

- Are there targets that the doctoral student should focus on in particular?

Review and discuss planned and completed activities:

- Review and revise the planned activities

- Based on the discussion of goals and target fulfillment: Does the planning of the remaining course(s) need to be revised?

- Is there a need for an added mandatory course(s)? Compare with the general syllabus.

- What is left?

- Are you satisfied with planned courses/modules, conference participation, seminars?

- Are the question formulations and hypotheses relevant?

- What data collections, experiments, etc. have been performed so far?

- Have unexpected issues arisen and if so, how have these problems been solved?

- Do the preliminary results meet expectations?

- Is it clear which articles each module will result in? Who should be the co-author? How do you work together concerning the writing process? Can anything be improved?

- Does the doctoral student receive sufficient practice in research communication? Nationally and internationally? Regarding other researchers as well as in other contexts?

- Is there an opportunity for a research stay abroad or to participate in international contexts in other ways?

- Are there opportunities for the doctoral student to teach?

- How shall the goals/targets regarding collaboration with the rest of society be achieved?

## Part 5: Progression of studies, supervision, and plans for career after studies

- Discuss the progression of the studies.

- Do you as a doctoral student require more help, and if so, with what and by whom/how?

- Discuss your respective expectations of each other i.e., both the doctoral student and the supervisors.

- Do the meetings between the doctoral student and the supervisor take place at appropriate intervals? Do other reconciliations or meetings need to be planned?

- Is the division of responsibilities clear within the supervisor group and the doctoral student?

- Is there a need for changes within the supervisor constellation, for example, is an additional second supervisor needed?

- How much is left? Can everything be achieved within the planned time frame? If not - why not?

# Checklist for annual follow-up of ISP

Below is a guide for annual follow-up of individual study plan based on the template for ISP.

## Part 1: General information

- **Review previously filled-in information from the previous ISP and update if necessary** (what should be included is stated in the points below). If something has changed, e.g., change of the supervisor constellation, change of general syllabus, etc., then this must be updated.

- **Fill in personal information, school, subject, employment, and employers that are requested.**

- **Enter start date of doctoral education** (see admission decision).

- **Fill in if the doctoral student has been admitted to a licentiate education, doctoral education, or the later part of the doctoral education** (see admission decision). The later part of the doctoral education must be filled in if the doctoral student has been admitted to a licentiate education, taken a licentiate degree, and after that been admitted to a doctoral education.

- **Enter the credits required for either the licentiate degree or doctoral degree** according to the general syllabus (ASP) on which the doctoral student is studying. See general syllabi at hh.se.

- **Enter the version number of the general syllabus.**
  Version numbers are found on the general syllabus that is relevant at the time of admission. See general syllabi at hh.se.

- **Fill in the name of the director of studies.**

- **Fill in the name of immediate superior.**
  This can be either an immediate superior at the university or an immediate superior where the doctoral student is elsewhere employed.

- **Fill in the names and university(s) or organisation(s) of the principal supervisor, second supervisor as well as any mentor or other people with key roles during the doctoral student's education.**

## Part 2: Overview of studies

- **Review previously filled-in information from the previous ISP and update if necessary** (what should be included is stated in the points below).

- **Enter any credits obtained whilst undertaking a doctoral education that are registered in Ladok.** This information can be found in Ladok. If you need help with this, contact Education Support via forskarladok@hh.se.

- **Achieved percentage of the studies; courses and thesis work:**
  Enter the estimated percentage and time frame of the studies that have been completed (assume that the completed doctoral degree is 100 percent, and the completed licentiate degree corresponds to 50 percent).

- **Degree of activity/study activity per semester in doctoral education as reported to Ladok:** Attach information from Ladok regarding the activity level per semester (per 6 months), for example by attaching text or an image. To be able to insert an image in the ISP template, you need to convert the document to a pdf (after other information has been filled in). You will find the information in Ladok: Home page -> click on My education -> click on the doctoral education subject/field.

**HALMSTAD UNIVERSITY**

## Computer Science and Engineering - INFODATA
Subject, Third-cycle • 240.0 hp

### Participation

| | |
|---|---|
| **Study period** | 2020-11-01 - 2024-11-02 |
| **Education code** | INFODATA |
| **Instance code** | IDD20HSM |

### Study activity

| | |
|---|---|
| 2021-01-01 - 2021-06-30 | 80% |
| 2020-07-01 - 2020-12-31 | 27% |

A third alternative is to attach a pdf document where the activity level in Ladok is stated. If you need help with this, contact Student Affairs via forskarladok@hh.se. Only the doctoral student's time spent studying the education is to be included in the activity level. Time for teaching or departmental work shall not be included in the report. Full-time (100 percent) corresponds to 40 hours / week on average.

- **The ethics of research that involves humans:**
  Indicate, according to the form, if ethical review is relevant or not. If you have more general questions regarding ethical review and personal data in research, you are welcome to contact the University's Research Ethics Committee.

- **Overview of planned completion of studies**
  State whether the doctoral student plans to take a licentiate degree or doctoral degree and the preliminary date for the licentiate seminar or public defence of doctoral thesis.

- **Doctoral thesis/Licentiate thesis:**
  State the format (monograph or compilation thesis) as well as the preliminary title of the doctoral thesis/licentiate thesis as well as a short summary of the research project.

## Part 3: Completed studies and follow-up of the previous study plan

- **Completed thesis work, for example, publications, participation in conferences, reports:**
  Enter title of publication, article, etc. and date for completion. Furthermore, state which qualitative target(s) the module/work contributes to fulfilling. Qualitative targets must be stated even if the module/work only to a certain extent meets the goals. For publications: enter full reference if accepted; otherwise, enter status.

- **The qualitative targets can be found in the attachment to the ISP template.**
  Reference to the qualitative targets is written with a letter/number combination in the ISP. For an explanation of the respective qualitative target, see the table in the attachment.

- **Completed mandatory and optional courses according to the general syllabus:**
  Enter title, credits, approved date for mandatory and optional courses. Furthermore, indicate other credit-bearing work, such as general and individual courses and other optional activities. Enter course codes, if any. Note that the courses must be documented in Ladok before they can be specified in the ISP. Also state which qualitative targets the course/module fulfils. Qualitative targets must be stated even if the course(s)/module(s) only partially meet the required target.

- **Completed examination seminar or equivalent (e.g., mid-term seminar, Research Proposal (RP) seminar, licentiate seminar, final seminar.)**
  Indicate the activity, date, and which qualitative target(s) the work/module contributes to comply/fulfil. Qualitative targets must be stated even if the elements only to a certain extent fulfil the target.

- **Completed departmental duties at the University or work outside the University** (state e.g., administration, teaching or other tasks, state extent in percent): Describe type of work and extent as a percentage of full-time work. For example, if a doctoral student is studying part-time and at the same time working, the extent and content of the work must be stated, regardless of whether the work is linked to the studies or not.

- **Other aspects/issues that have affected the studies, such as sick leave, parental leave, positions of trust** (state examples and time-period as well as extent in percent): Indicate any other factors that have influenced the doctoral studies. For example, if an approved leave of studies has been granted, then this must be stated here.

- **Any change of events - Comment if there are steps that have not been completed according to the latest ISP:**
  Start from the previous ISP, part 4 Planned studies, courses, and doctoral thesis work for the coming period, and state any changes from what was planned for the previous period. For example, if a course, publication, seminar, or conference could not be completed or not completed within the planned time frame, please provide an explanation for this. It should be clear in what way any changes of events affect the planning of further doctoral studies.

## Part 4: Planned studies, courses, and doctoral thesis for the coming period

- **Review and update/delete** possible accomplishments achieved since the previous ISP period. Add upcoming planned steps according to the points below.

- **Reporting of the planned activity in the doctoral education for this ISP period:**
  Enter the estimated degree of activity for the doctoral student's coming year's doctoral education as a percentage: 100% being full-time.

- **Planned doctoral thesis work / licentiate thesis:**
  Review the summary of planned work on the doctoral thesis/licentiate thesis.

- **Planned activities/work regarding doctoral thesis / publications:**
  Enter title (preliminary) for publications, seminars, conferences, reports, etc. that will start or are ongoing within the coming ISP period. NB! The planned end-date may fall later than within the ISP period/time frame.

- **Planned mandatory courses:**
  Enter title, credits, and planned end-date of planned mandatory courses according to [the general syllabus](#).

- **Planned optional courses:**
  Enter title, credits, and planned end-date for planned optional courses. Also state other credit-bearing elements, such as general and individual courses as well as other optional activities.

- **Planned examination seminar or equivalent** (e.g., mid-term seminar, Research Proposal (RP) seminar licentiate seminar, final seminar, public defence of thesis): Enter the name of the activity and the date of planned implementation.

- **Planned departmental duties at the University or work outside the University** for this ISP period (state e.g., administration, teaching or other tasks, state extent in percent): Describe type of work and extent as a percentage of full-time work. For example, if a doctoral student is studying part-time and at the same time working, the extent and content of the work must be stated, regardless of whether the work is linked to the studies or not.

- **Other aspects that will affect the studies**, such as sick leave, parental leave, positions of trust for this ISP period (state examples and time-period, as well as scope in percent): Indicate any other factors that may affect the doctoral studies. In the event of any circumstances that lead to longer breaks from the doctoral studies, it may be relevant to apply for approved leave from studies, see [the doctoral student guide](#).

## Part 5: Progression of studies, supervision, and planning for a career after studies

- **Comments from doctoral students:**
  The doctoral student comments by either ticking that the current studies and supervision are Conducted According to Plan, May Need to be Modified Somewhat, or Not Conducted According to Plan as well as the possibility of free text comments.

- **Comments from supervisor(s):**
  The supervisor comments by either ticking that the current studies and supervision are Conducted According to Plan, May Need to be Modified Somewhat, or Not Conducted According to Plan as well as the possibility of free text comments. NB! The principal supervisor is responsible for obtaining the other supervisors' views.

- **Supervisors' activities/changes of events that may have an impact regarding the scope and/or quality of supervision:**
  Enter any activities/change of events, such as leave of absence, sick leave, parental leave, longer visits abroad, positions of trust, change of employment. If these changes of events are expected to affect the scope and quality of the supervision, it must state what measures are taken to ensure that the doctoral student receives adequate supervision.

- **How is the supervision distributed between the principal supervisor and the second supervisor in time (and possibly in the distribution of tasks)?**
  Enter hours per supervisor and year, as well as the distribution of tasks if this is relevant.

- **Follow-up appraisal - regarding the doctoral education:**
  Fill in dates and participants in the follow-up meetings. Follow-up meetings are held each time the individual study plan is updated. The director of studies, the principal supervisor, at least one second supervisor as well as the doctoral student must participate in the annual follow-up.

- **Career planning after the studies – enter activities:**
  Enter activities for career after studies, such as workshops, networking, dialogue/possible further qualifications, future projects, and new positions in the research area as well as making use of the supervision sessions to discuss possible career paths.

- **What is important in the coming period for this syllabus to keep to its time frame?**
  Indicate any factors that may affect or prevent the activities from being carried out within the specified time frame and any priorities that need to be made.

## Part 6: Signatures

- Carefully check the contents and make sure that all parts are filled in correctly. When the individual study plan is considered complete, it needs to be signed by the doctoral student, principal supervisor, and director of studies. It will then be sent to the Committee for Doctoral Education who will make their decision.

- The principal supervisor's signature certifies that all supervisors have read and accepted the content of the ISP. Confirmation from the supervisor can be made via e-mail (however, this does not need to be attached to the ISP).

- Following a decision by the Committee for Doctoral Education at Halmstad University, the ISP is signed by the Chairperson of the Committee for Doctoral Education at Halmstad University.

- The signatures are, in most cases, done digitally. For more information, see Digital signatures - edusign. Is anyone outside the university sector required to sign the document? If so, the easiest way is to ask them to create an account and log in with an eduID via eduid.se. It is free for anyone to create such an account.