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## Rules for Change of Supervisor for Doctoral Students

Rules for change of supervisors at the University of Borås have been proposed by the university's boards: Research and Education Board (FoU) 2013-03-21 and the Artistic Research and Education Board (KFU) 2013-04-24. These rules will come into force after the Vice-Chancellor's decision 2013-05-21.

### Introduction

The purpose of this document is to clarify how decisions are made and by whom when changing supervisors. The text below mentions both the research area and the Faculty because the area is responsible for the education and the Faculty for the doctoral student's employment. It is the responsibility of the Faculty to ensure that the supervisor is in charge of a doctoral student. It is the responsibility of the research area to ensure adequate supervision takes place.

The highest responsibility for the university's research education areas lies (for those areas with their own examination rights), with the artistic field, the KFU board, and, for other scientific areas, the FoU board. FoU has delegated operational responsibility for doctoral education to the Research Education Committee (FUU) belonging to each research area. At the university, there are currently three doctoral education committees.

The KFU has no subcommittees but decides on all issues relating to the relevant doctoral education.

If the doctoral student is admitted to doctoral education at another institution, the other university's local for the change of supervisors apply.

It is the Faculty at which a doctoral student is employed or has his/her main placement that is to handle the matter without delay when it comes to change of supervisor (see point C. Appendix).

## A. Doctoral student wishes to change principal supervisor

This excerpt from the Higher Education Ordinance Chap. 6, Section 28, reads:

*For each doctoral student, at least two supervisors must be appointed. One of them will be appointed as principal supervisor. A doctoral student is entitled to supervision during the course of the education as long as the Vice-Chancellor, with the support of Section 30, does not decide otherwise. A doctoral student who requests it may change supervisors. (SFS 2010: 1064)*

In cases where a doctoral candidate requests a change of principal supervisor during the study period, the decision about a new principal supervisor will be taken in the appropriate board in accordance with regulations.

### Conditions for undergoing the supervisor change process

Subject to the fact that the doctoral student is admitted to doctoral education at the University of Borås, the student has the right to change the principal supervisor, assistant supervisor, or all supervisors, at their own request and for their own reasons. In cases where the doctoral student's request applies only to assistant supervisors, the issue will primarily be resolved at the research area and Faculty level without the involvement of the board and the process should primarily be through dialogue at the Faculty level that the Director of Studies for doctoral education will facilitate.

Such a request for change of supervisor can only be done once per calendar year unless special reasons exist. The doctoral candidate can suggest a supervisor but is not entitled to require a particular supervisor.

### Process

The process will be applied when a doctoral student asks for the replacement of the principal supervisor or when a change is requested by both the principal supervisor and the assistant

supervisor. The term "supervisor" is used in either case in the text below.

1. The doctoral student contacts the director of studies<sup>1</sup> to express the wish to change supervisors.
2. The doctoral student leaves a written request for the change of the principal supervisor to the director of studies and the relevant committee (copy).

The request shall use the extant application form for change of supervisor with information such as:

- a. Description<sup>2</sup> by which supervisor is to be changed out.
  - b. An attached copy of the latest version of the individual study plan as signed by supervisor, examiner and doctoral student.
  - c. The doctoral student's associated FU number, available from the registrar.
  - d. Signature of doctoral student
3. The Director of Studies will book a meeting between Dean of Faculty, Director of Studies, subject representative<sup>3</sup> and the doctoral student.
  4. The Dean is responsible for preparing, in consultation with the student and Director of Studies, a proposal for a new principal supervisor within one month.
  5. The Director of Studies discusses proposals for new (a) principal supervisor with the doctoral student. Signatures from interested parties are signed in meeting minutes (academic, examiner, doctoral student, and all supervisors).
  6. The relevant committee<sup>4</sup> decides on the change of supervisor, and makes the decision to the student's file. Ladok is informed of the change of supervisor.
  7. Within one month after the decision of a new supervisor has been taken, a new individual study plan must be prepared and a copy shall be provided to the board.

Please note that the change of research subject takes place in a separate process. In support of such an application, documentation corresponding to that of a normal application for admission to doctoral education is required.

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<sup>1</sup> In the event that the Director of Studies is the supervisor of the doctoral student to which the decision applies, the matter is submitted to the board chairperson.

<sup>2</sup> See application form for change of supervisor.

<sup>3</sup> Subject representatives shall not be an existing supervisor for a doctoral student, but should, if possible, come from the FUU or the KFU.

<sup>4</sup> If the chairperson of the board is the principal supervisor to be replaced, decisions on the new principal supervisor shall be taken by the Vice Chairperson of the board.

## B. Principal supervisor wishes to be replaced

In cases where the principal supervisor cannot complete the assignment e.g. due to illness, discontinuation of employment at the university, or another reason, the situation should primarily be resolved at the research area level and Faculty without the board taking the decision on replacements. In cases where a principal supervisor is unable to fulfil the commitment, the board's delegation of authority (Reg. 949-10-60) will apply within the Research Education Committee and the decision to appoint new supervisors will be taken at the level of the research area and Faculty.

### Process

The Director of Studies leads the process in consultation with applicable board, but the Dean of Faculty ensuring the replacement is assigned within one month.

The formal process should follow the steps below:

1. The principal supervisor will contact the Director of Studies and submit a written application to be replaced as the principal supervisor. Documentation will be submitted to the Director of Studies. The request shall use the extant application form for change of supervisor with information such as:
  - a. The supervisor who wishes to be changed out and the doctoral student concerned.
  - b. Attach a copy of the latest version of the individual study plan signed by the supervisor, examiner and doctoral student.
  - c. The student's FU number (available from the registrar).
  - d. The supervisor's signature.
2. The Director of Studies and examiner for the doctoral student informs the doctoral student that the principal supervisor wishes to be replaced.
3. The Director of Studies takes the request as soon as possible to the board, which is then helpful in the determination of a new supervisor.
4. The Dean of Faculty is responsible for setting a proposal for a new principal supervisor within one month from the applicable board's initiation of the work of finding a new principal supervisor.

5. The Director of Studies discusses the suggestion of the new principal supervisor with the doctoral student<sup>5</sup>. If the doctoral student has no objection, the decision will be made by the board.
6. The FUU or the KFU decides on the change of supervisor. The doctoral student's file is updated and Ladok is informed of the change.
7. Within one month of the decision of a new supervisor, a new individual study plan shall be drawn up and a copy shall be available to the board.

### C. Additional information

If a proposal for a supervisor or supervisors is not submitted within one month, based on first documented contact with the Director of Studies, the doctoral student is entitled to extend the length of education corresponding to the overdue period, i.e. time after one month until decision is taken.

If a decision regarding a new principal supervisor is not taken within three months of the request, the Dean of Faculty shall be called to the board to report the problem. If the board finds that there are no particular reasons for preventing the decision about a new principal supervisor, the board may decide to temporarily suspend the admission of doctoral students to the area concerned.

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<sup>5</sup> If a doctoral student would not like suggestion for a supervisor made by the Faculty, the board will examine the question and review proposals and alternatives. Meanwhile, a temporary supervisor solution will be established by having another researcher within the subject area entering a temporary supervisor role.