

CODE OF CONDUCT

30.5.2015

Doctoral School in Environmental, Food and Biological Sciences (YEB)

YEB's code of conduct describes the minimum requirements set for all doctoral candidates and supervisors in YEB. The aim is to establish good practices that enable completion of the doctoral degree within four years of full-time study.

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1. Doctoral training in the Doctoral School in Environmental, Food and Biological Sciences (YEB)

A doctoral training system including four doctoral schools and 32 doctoral programmes was introduced at the University of Helsinki in 2014. The entity covers all doctoral candidates and research fields of the university: <http://www.helsinki.fi/doctoral-schools/>

The aim of postgraduate education is that the doctoral candidate:

- becomes well-versed in his or her field of research and its' social significance;
- gains the knowledge and skills needed to apply scientific research methods independently and critically and to produce new scientific knowledge;
- becomes conversant with the development, basic problems and research methods of his or her own field of research;
- gains such knowledge of the general theory of science and of other disciplines relating to his or her own field of research as enables him or her to follow developments in them;
- gains adequate language and communication skills, as well as the knowledge and skills needed to carry out wide-ranging and demanding expert and development duties and to participate in international cooperation.

The Doctoral School in Environmental, Food and Biological Sciences (Finnish acronym YEB for Ympäristö-, Elintarvike- ja Biotieteellinen tutkijakoulu) is multidisciplinary by nature. The research fields within YEB typically integrate both basic and applied sciences. On the one hand, studies produce basic information on ecosystems and organisms while on the other hand, they seek solutions to challenges such as environmental change, nature conservation, sustainable use of natural resources, development needs of biotechnology and the need for a safe and sustainable food chain.

The doctoral school ensures that doctoral candidates obtain systematic supervision and high-quality education. A personal supervisor is appointed for each doctoral candidate. All doctoral candidates have the same rights and responsibilities.

It is possible to study for a doctoral degree either full-time or part-time. The goal is to complete the degree in four years of full-time study. The main focus of doctoral studies is to pursue one's own research, starting from the first year. Additionally, doctoral candidates take part in courses, seminars, conferences and other learning opportunities to achieve the required 40 or 60 ECTS credits. Courses cover academic topics and transferable skills and are organised by the six thematic doctoral programmes of YEB and the doctoral school:

<http://www.helsinki.fi/doctoral-schools/environmental-food-and-biological-sciences/index.html>

Doctoral candidates fund their studies in different ways, e.g., with salary from University of Helsinki, personal grants, or research project funding granted to the supervisor.

Doctoral candidates are recommended to join the mailing list of YEB, which is used to advertise the activities of the doctoral school (see chapter 4.1 for instructions how to join).

2. Five steps to help you get started with doctoral studies

- a) Look for a thesis supervisor: get in touch with experienced scientists in the field of study of your interest - visit research group homepages, check the doctoral programme lists of principal investigators.
- b) Select a suitable doctoral programme after consultation with your supervisor.
- c) Draw up a research plan together with your supervisor and discuss it with the professor in charge. Familiarise yourself with the instructions for doctoral candidates set by your faculty; see the YEB homepage (Organisation > Faculties and institutes; chapter 4.2) for the faculty responsible for your doctoral programme.
- d) Make a study plan on the form available for the purpose on your faculty website.
- e) Apply for the right to pursue a doctoral degree at the University of Helsinki according to the instructions of your faculty.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 Responsibilities of the doctoral candidate

- a) Fulfil all the requirements of the faculty and doctoral programme agreed upon at the time of admission including active participation in YEB courses, workshops, symposia and other respective events which promote your integration into the scientific community.
- b) Be committed to the doctoral project and understand that the research work and completion of the doctoral degree studies are ultimately your own responsibility.
- c) Ensure that the thesis is your own work and the final version has been read and commented upon by your supervisor(s) prior to submission for examination.
- d) Take into consideration the guidance and feedback from your supervisor. Clarify the expectations in supervision and agree about the practical aspects of supervision using the forms available for the purpose (see links in chapter 4.3).
- e) Adopt and understand the protocol of good scientific practice, the general principles of ethical aspects in science and the ethical regulations of the research field. Learn to recognise the qualified journals and those which will be suitable for publishing your results (see links in chapter 4.8).

- f) Alert the supervisor and follow-up group of any difficulties or lack of progress at an early stage.
- g) Invite and schedule a meeting for your follow-up group members once a year.
- h) Submit relevant information demonstrating the progress of your doctoral project and doctoral degree studies to the follow-up group prior to meeting them. Report the results of the follow-up meeting to your doctoral programme using the form available for the purpose.

3.2 Responsibilities of the supervisor

The doctoral candidate must have at least one supervisor. The main supervisor is a professor, or has the title of docent or has equivalent academic qualifications. Co-supervisor(s) must hold at least a doctorate degree. Supervisors should have the necessary expertise, experience and time to guide and support the doctoral candidate in the subject of the thesis. The human resources unit of the University of Helsinki offers training in leadership and group management skills.

- a) Commit yourself to supervision of the doctoral candidate for the duration of the PhD project. Clarify the expectations in supervision using the form available for the purpose (see chapter 4.3). In addition, the doctoral candidate, the main supervisor and the co-supervisors fill in and sign a thesis supervision agreement (link to the form in chapter 4.3), which is valid for four years from the date of signature or until submission of the thesis for pre-examination. Remember to agree with the student about ownership of the data generated during the thesis research.
- b) Keep yourself updated about the latest progress in the research field of the doctoral candidate.
- c) Exercise careful supervision of the doctoral candidate. Evaluate and support the scientific progress of the doctoral candidate, ensure that necessary adjustments in plans are made and implemented and the results are published in qualified journals and verify that the final thesis complies with the criteria set by the faculty.
- d) Take into account that the doctoral candidate must be able to complete the doctoral degree and related studies in four years of full-time study.
- e) Ensure compliance with the code of ethics of the University of Helsinki.
- f) Provide comments on the manuscripts and doctoral thesis draft prior to examination and ensure that the final thesis is the candidate's own work.
- g) Treat all your doctoral candidates equally.
- h) When the doctoral thesis is ready for pre-examination, discuss the potential pre-examiners and opponent for the dissertation with the doctoral candidate and the professor in charge.
- i) Assist the doctoral candidate in career planning.

3.3 Responsibilities of the follow-up group

Progress of the doctoral candidate is annually evaluated by a follow-up group. It is comprised of two external experts familiar with the research field of the doctoral thesis. The two members of the follow-up group should not be working in the same research group with the doctoral candidate and should also otherwise be independent. The members of the follow-up group proposed by the doctoral candidate and the supervisor must be approved by the steering group of the doctoral programme and the faculty.

The purpose of annual monitoring:

- a) Supports the doctoral candidate and the supervisor(s): provides constructive feedback on the progress of studies and research, discusses future plans of the doctoral candidate, and provides recommendations.
- b) Monitors the quality of research and studies.
- c) Expresses opinions concerning the stage of the thesis and doctoral studies, including readiness of the thesis for pre-examination with reference to the guidelines of the faculty.
- d) Checks for indications of personal or research-related problems, including those concerning supervision. If these emerge, the follow-up group should notify the coordinator of the doctoral programme (see also chapter 3.8).

3.4 Responsibilities of the professor in charge

The professor in charge is responsible for the dissertation process and the doctoral candidates in the major subject she/he represents. The professor in charge:

- a) discusses the study plan with the doctoral candidate and supervisor;
- b) helps the doctoral candidate find a new supervisor, if the supervisor is unable to ensure the continuity of supervision;
- c) ensures the quality of the dissertation manuscript and its' suitability for pre-examination;
- d) ensures that the studies required for the doctoral degree have been completed;
- e) participates in solving problem situations; and
- f) initiates the dissertation examination process, makes the proposal to the faculty for appointment of the pre-examiners and the opponent, and monitors its' progress until the completion of the degree.

3.5 Responsibilities of the doctoral programme

The doctoral programme organises courses covering different aspects of basic and applied sciences and research methodology in the programme's thematic area. The doctoral

programme also offers the doctoral candidates with various forms of support at different stages of their studies.

The doctoral programme makes an assessment as to whether the research project of the doctoral applicant is relevant for the programme, the study plan is appropriate, and can make recommendations concerning the follow-up group members.

Applications for grants and stipends paid from the funding available from YEB are evaluated by the doctoral programmes.

3.6 Responsibilities of the doctoral school

The purpose of the doctoral school is to support doctoral programmes and to ensure that all doctoral candidates obtain systematic supervision and high-quality education including courses that cover both academic topics and transferable skills. The doctoral school actively seeks national and international funding for doctoral education in cooperation with doctoral programmes.

The steering committee of YEB is in charge of the strategic planning of the doctoral school and promotes collaboration between YEB and its' partner institutions. It develops the actions and practices of the doctoral school, procedures for application and recruitment of doctoral candidates, and reviews annual budgets and action plans.

The director of the doctoral school acts as the chairperson of the steering committee and is responsible for preparation of matters to be discussed by the steering committee. The director makes decisions concerning the allocation of funding granted to the school and is responsible for cooperation in the area of doctoral education. YEB's coordinator is the secretary of the steering committee, plans and implements the doctoral school's activities, keeps contact with YEB's national and international partners, manages finances and is responsible for communication within the doctoral school.

3.7 Responsibilities of the faculties

The faculties decide on the selection criteria, grant the right to pursue a doctoral degree, and confer the degree. The faculty council makes decisions concerning the doctoral degree requirements and the content of the degrees granted by the faculty.

3.8. Responsibilities in problem situations

Problems related to disagreement between the doctoral candidate and the supervisor, lack of progress of the studies, or other exceptional problems may develop during the course of the study. Should such a situation be realised by either the doctoral candidate or the supervisor or a member of the follow-up group, they are responsible for contacting the coordinator of the doctoral programme, and if the situation so demands, the faculty office. They in turn are

responsible for seeking for a solution. The professor in charge should be informed and involved in solving the problem.

In order to avoid problem situations evolving it is of the utmost importance that the doctoral candidate and supervisor(s) discuss and agree about the division of work, practical arrangements and rights and responsibilities in detail at the beginning of the studies. They should also meet to discuss progress and problems frequently and also discuss these issues with the follow-up group.

4. Useful links and guidelines

4.1 Mailing list of YEB

It is recommended that all doctoral candidates within YEB join the YEB mailing list, which is used to advertise the activities of the doctoral school (yeb-doctoralschool@helsinki.fi).

To subscribe, send an e-mail to majordomo@helsinki.fi and leave the subject-line empty. In the message field write "subscribe yeb-doctoral school". In case of problems with subscription, please send a request on joining the list to the coordinator of the doctoral school.

The coordinator of each doctoral programme keeps an email list of all doctoral candidates and supervisors. Course announcements, seminars, conference information, job offers etc. are sent through these lists.

4.2 Homepage of YEB

Information regarding grants, upcoming courses, doctoral dissertations, contact information etc. as well as links to the homepages of the doctoral programmes are available at:

<http://www.helsinki.fi/doctoral-schools/environmental-food-and-biological-sciences/index.html>

4.3 Guidelines for doctoral studies and drawing up the study plan

Clarification of the expectations of supervision: [form in English and Finnish](#)

Thesis supervision agreement form to be discussed and filled in by the doctoral candidate and supervisor: [form in English, Swedish and Finnish](#)

Please check the precise requirements and guidelines from the webpage of your own faculty:

Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry

<http://www.helsinki.fi/af-faculty/studies/postgraduate/guidelines.html>

Faculty of Biological and Environmental Sciences:

http://www.helsinki.fi/bio/faculty/admissions/phd_studies/index.html

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine:

http://www.vetmed.helsinki.fi/english/studying/postgrad_instructions.html

Faculty of Science: <http://www.helsinki.fi/facultyofscience/>

Faculty of Law: <http://www.helsinki.fi/law/>

Faculty of Arts: <http://www.helsinki.fi/hum/english/>

Faculty of Social Sciences: <http://www.helsinki.fi/socialsciences/>

4.4 Travel grants

Doctoral candidates may apply for travel grants to attend scientific meetings, conferences and courses; oral or poster presentation is obligatory for acceptance. Funding may be provided for partial costs of expeditions and visits to research groups. All travel grant applications are judged by their relevance to the doctoral education of the applicant.

The application times for travel grants are announced on the homepages of the doctoral programmes. The main application times are February, May and October.

4.5 Dissertation completion grant

The dissertation completion grant is intended for the work required on a dissertation manuscript before it is submitted for preliminary examination. The grant is provided for a maximum of 3 months.

Dissertation completion grants may be awarded to doctoral candidates who have been admitted to pursue a doctoral degree by the University of Helsinki, are completing the degree at the University of Helsinki, and belong to one of the doctoral programmes of the University of Helsinki. The doctoral candidate and her/his supervisor must apply together for the grant.

Confirm from the coordinator of YEB (see application instructions) well in advance, whether there are any relevant instructions concerning the submission or schedule of processing the applications.

Further information:

https://flamma.helsinki.fi/portal/home/sisalto?_nfpb=true&_windowLabel=contentviewer&contentId=HY278529&lang=en&_pageLabel=content_view

4.6 Publishing the dissertation

a) The doctoral candidates within Doctoral School in Environmental, Food and Biological Sciences are privileged to be able to publish their doctoral thesis in the YEB series '*Dissertationes Schola Doctoralis Scientiae Circumiectalis, Alimentariae, Biologicae*'. A dedicated member of staff will assist doctoral candidates in YEB with the cover design of the doctoral thesis and all other practical matters regarding the publication of the thesis in the YEB series.

You can apply for financial support to cover the costs of printing the doctoral thesis.

Further information:

http://www.helsinki.fi/doctoral-schools/environmental-food-and-biological-sciences/dissertation_publication.html

General instructions for publishing the doctoral thesis:

<http://www.helsinki.fi/tohtoriksi/english/publication.htm>

4.7 Contact persons in YEB

E-mail addresses follow the form firstname.surname@helsinki.fi unless otherwise specified.

Doctoral school YEB

Director: Professor Jari Valkonen

Coordinator: PhD Karin Hemmann

DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES:

Doctoral Programme in food chain and health (RUOKA)

Director: Professor Hannu Korkeala

Coordinator: MSc Laila Huuonen

Doctoral Programme in interdisciplinary environmental sciences (DENVI)

Director: Professor Kristina Lindström

Coordinator: PhD Anni Tonteri

Doctoral Programme in microbiology and biotechnology (MBDP)

Director: Professor Marko Virta

Coordinator: PhD Kari Steffen

Doctoral Programme in plant sciences (DPPS)

Director: Professor Jaakko Kangasjärvi

Coordinator: PhD Karen Sims-Huopaniemi

Doctoral Programme in sustainable use of renewable natural resources (AGFOREE)

Director: Professor Annikki Mäkelä

Coordinator: PhD Risto Kasanen

Doctoral Programme in wildlife biology (LUOVA)

Director: Professor Liselotte Sundström

Coordinator: PhD Anni Tonteri

4.8 Miscellaneous

Guidelines of the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity (TENK) and the University of Helsinki:

http://www.tenk.fi/sites/tenk.fi/files/HTK_ohje_2012.pdf

Reliable open access journals:

<http://doaj.org/>

Questionable, corrupt or “predatory” journals to be avoided:

<http://scholarlyoa.com/2014/01/02/list-of-predatory-publishers-2014/>

<http://scholarlyoa.com/2015/01/02/bealls-list-of-predatory-publishers-2015/>

General information about education programmes at the University of Helsinki:

http://www.helsinki.fi/admissions/postgraduate_applicants.html

The law in higher education in Finland:

Government degree 1039/2013: <http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/alkup/2013/20131039>

Searching for a job:

www.finbionet.fi

www.naturejobs.com

www.sciencecareers.com