



# General syllabus for third-cycle studies in mathematical statistics for a degree of licentiate

**Scope:** 120 higher education credits

**The Degree:** Degree of Licentiate

**Study level:** Third-cycle

**Established by:** General syllabus established by the Faculty of Science and Technology Board on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020

**Enters into force:** December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020

**Responsible body:** Faculty of Science and Technology

## 1. Field of Study

Mathematical Statistics in the sense of this syllabus is the general scientific field that deals with mathematical methods for analysing random phenomena. The subject mathematical statistics includes probability theory and statistical theory. It is the theoretical basis for many probabilistic models, computational techniques and algorithms and their application to empirical statistical problems, data analysis and a wide range of subjects in applied science and society. The probability theory and statistical theory are intimately linked because the statistical theory is based on the former and often gives rise to probability-theoretical problems. Mathematical statistics is a research area in rapid development and has many interfaces with applied research, especially during the era of Big Data and artificial intelligence, at the same time new techniques for data analysis based in theoretical computer science and computational mathematics have begun to be incorporated into mathematical statistics.

Holders of a licentiate degree in Mathematical Statistics are expected to have acquired good overall expertise of the subject, and deep knowledge in their particular area of specialisation. The latter is demonstrated by the ability to conduct research that makes significant contributions to the field as outlined above. In order to enable the licentiate student to achieve this, admission to third-cycle studies is restricted to areas of specialisation in which high quality supervision by senior researchers can be provided.

## 2. Learning outcomes

### 2.1 Description of education at current level

The education is at the research level. The goals for postgraduate education are found in the Higher Education Act, Chapter 1, Section 9a.

### 2.2 Learning outcomes for the current degree

The national learning outcomes for the degree can be found in Appendix 2 of the Higher Education Ordinance.

The learning outcomes for the degree of licentiate in Mathematical Statistics are those specified by the Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Sections 4 and 5 (see Appendix A), where the terms



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research field and area of specialisation are to be interpreted in accordance with the preceding section. These learning outcomes are complemented by a gender and equal opportunities perspective which is integrated in the content and organisation of the programme. It provides the student with additional insights into how the upholding of inequality by traditional structures and perspectives can be counteracted.

### 3. Entry requirements and prior knowledge required

To be admitted for studies at third-cycle level the applicant is required to meet the general entry requirements and the specific entry requirements that the board of the Faculty of Science and Technology Board has prescribed and shall be considered as otherwise possessing that required to benefit from the studies. (Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 35)

#### General entry requirements

To fulfil the general entry requirements, the applicant must have qualifications equivalent to a completed degree at second-cycle level, or completed course requirements of at least 240 ECTS credits including at least 60 ECTS credits at second-cycle level. The board of the Faculty of Science and Technology may, in the case of a specific applicant, consent to an exemption from the general entry requirements, if there are special reasons to do so. (Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 39)

#### Specific entry requirements

To fulfil the specific entry requirements to be admitted for studies at third-cycle level in mathematical statistics, the applicant is required to have completed at least 60 ECTS credits within the fields of mathematical statistics, statistics and mathematics, of which at least 15 ECTS credits shall have been acquired at second-cycle level. Applicants who in some other system either within Sweden or abroad have acquired largely equivalent skills are also eligible.

### 4. Selection process

A selection process involving applicants who meet the entry requirements will be conducted with reference to their ability to benefit from third-cycle studies, and is based on the following assessment grounds:

- personal suitability
- previous study results and
- other merits

However, applicants must not be given preference over other applicants in the selection process solely based on the assessment that the applicant can receive accreditation for previous education or professional activities. (Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 7, Section 41)

Decisions regarding admissions to studies at third-cycle level concluding in a licentiate degree are made in accordance with Umeå University's delegation of authority.



## 5. Contents and scheduling

### 5.1 General

An individual study plan is to be established for each doctoral student which shall give details of financing, supervision, courses, thesis-related work, etc. For a degree of licentiate to be awarded, the studies shall entail 120 ECTS credits.

Studies at third-cycle level that are to be concluded with a licentiate degree shall comprise a net study period of two years. They consist of a course component of 45-60 ECTS credits and an academic thesis 60-75 ECTS credits.

### 5.2 Contents

Studies towards the degree of licentiate in Mathematical Statistics consist of courses and thesis work. The annual follow-up of the licentiate student's individual study plan ensures an appropriate selection of courses and other activities in order to achieve the national goals for third-cycle education.

The character of the education is highly international. Many licentiate students participate in international collaborations, and all are expected to present their research results in international contexts.

#### 5.2.1 Courses

##### **Mandatory Courses:**

The course part consists of a fixed set of mandatory courses and a variable number of courses individually determined according to the licentiate student's needs. The mandatory courses convey generic skills, provide insight into the subject and its scientific methodology in general, and take up questions regarding gender issues and equal terms as integral parts. The elective courses convey skills of relevance for the thesis topic and for general education in mathematical statistics. Courses developing general competence, at least 5 ECTS credits from the following courses:

- *Introduction to Doctoral Studies at the Faculty of Science and Technology*, 1 ECTS credit
- *Philosophy of Science*, 2 ECTS credits
- *Introduction to Research Ethics*, 2 ECTS credits

*Courses developing general competence in Mathematical Statistics:*

- *Seminars and Research Presentation*, 4 ECTS credits

Additional mandatory courses for the individual doctoral student can be specified in the admission decision.

##### **Elective Courses:**

Courses relevant to the third-cycle study programme comprising at least 36 ECTS credits. Of these, at least 30 ECTS credits shall be within Mathematical Statistics, including a general educative



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section comprising courses in inference theory of at least 7.5 ECTS credits and probability theory of at least 7.5 ECTS credits.

### 5.2.2 Licentiate thesis

The licentiate thesis comprises at least 60 ECTS credits. It may either take the form of a single coherent work (a monograph) or a compilation consisting of an introduction, a number of scientific papers, and a summary and discussion of the papers which includes a description of the author's contributions to each paper (compilation thesis). In both cases the number of ECTS credits of the thesis is to be indicated. Further, the thesis shall contain a popular scientific description aimed at readers outside academia.

With the thesis, the licentiate shall demonstrate that the national goals for a licentiate degree are met. The licentiate thesis shall be defended orally in public, resulting in an assessment with one of the following grades: G (Pass) or U (Fail). When setting the grade, the grading committee and the examiner shall pay attention to both the content of the thesis and its defence.

## 6. Examination

The degree of licentiate is awarded upon completion of third-cycle studies equivalent to 120 ECTS credits, provided that the applicant has received the grade *Pass* in all mandatory parts. In particular, this includes the public defence of the licentiate thesis and its approval by the examiner based on the assessment from the grading committee. Degree certificates are issued following application to Student Services/Examina.

## 7. Other instructions

The provisions that apply in respect of third-cycle studies can be found in:

- The Higher Education Ordinance: Chapter 5 Employment of doctoral students, Chapter 6 Courses and study programmes, and Chapter 7 Admission to courses and study programmes, Annex 2 Qualifications ordinance.
- Admission regulations for doctoral studies at Umeå University.
- Local system of qualifications at Umeå University.
- Regulations for doctoral studies at Umeå University.
- Handbook for postgraduate students at the Faculty of Science and Technology at Umeå University.



# Appendix A

## *Learning outcomes for the degree of licentiate*

(Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 6, Sections 4 and 5)

### **Knowledge and understanding**

For the degree of Licentiate, the third-cycle student shall

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the field of research including current specialist knowledge in a limited area of this field as well as specialized knowledge of research methodology in general and the methods of the specific field of research in particular.

### **Competence and skills**

For the degree of Licentiate, the third-cycle student shall

- 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 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 the degree of Licentiate, the third-cycle student shall

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