

Admission criteria for doctoral programmes in the Doctoral School in Natural Sciences

These guidelines apply to doctoral education for which applications can be submitted as of 1 August 2017. The guidelines will apply until further notice.

1. The admission criteria apply to the following doctoral programmes in the Doctoral School in Natural Sciences:

Doctoral Programme in Particle Physics and Universe Sciences (PAPU)
Doctoral Programme in Geosciences (GEODOC)
Doctoral Programme in Atmospheric Sciences (ATM-DP)
Doctoral Programme in Chemistry and Molecular Sciences (CHEMS)
Doctoral Programme in Mathematics and Statistics (DOMAST)
Doctoral Programme in Materials Research and Nanosciences (MATRENA)
Doctoral Programme in Computer Science (DOCS)

2. General information

Student admission to the doctoral programmes is based on the University of Helsinki's general admission guidelines for doctoral education as well as the programme-specific details.

All postgraduate research students pursue a doctoral degree. The right to complete a degree may only be obtained through an admission procedure.

The application periods in the 2017–2018 academic year are 1–14 September and 1–14 November 2017 as well as 1–14 February and 3–16 April 2018.

3. Eligibility

Pursuant to section 37 of the Universities Act (558/2009), eligible applicants for studies leading to a postgraduate research degree have completed

- 1) An applicable second-cycle university degree,
- 2) An applicable second-cycle degree from a university of applied sciences, or
- 3) An applicable education at an institution abroad providing eligibility for equivalent higher education in the country in question.

All studies required for a second-cycle degree or equivalent education must be completed before the deadline for applications. Applicants for the right to complete a doctoral degree must enclose with their application a copy of their degree diploma and a transcript of studies or of other certificates with which they wish to demonstrate that they have the required knowledge and skills. The copies accompanying the application (incl. of the diploma) must be certified; however, certificates of language tests must be original certificates from the awarding institution. The other documents attached to the application must be in Finnish, Swedish or English, or a translation into one of these by an authorised translator that includes the translator's signature and stamp.

Copies of the degree diploma and the transcript of studies are sufficient if the degree that provides eligibility for postgraduate studies under section 37 of the Universities Act was completed at the University of Helsinki.

Applicants must have the language proficiency specified in the University of Helsinki's general admission guidelines.

4. Admission criteria

Admission criteria for doctoral education include the applicant's potential for success in academic postgraduate education, the quality and feasibility of the applicant's research proposal, the applicant's motivation, and the supervisory and other resources available for the research. Other criteria include the applicable content of previous studies to the prospective doctoral programme, the suitability of the research proposal for the research profile of the doctoral programme as well as the ability to complete the studies in the target duration.

The applicant's potential and motivation will be assessed on the basis of the quality and feasibility of the research proposal as well as previous academic performance and research experience. The ability to complete the studies in the target duration will be judged on the study plan, research proposal and funding plan. The study plan will be assessed specifically for its feasibility and appropriateness.

Before submitting their application, applicants must obtain a supporting statement from their supervisor(s) and a supervising professor.

5. Application

Applications must be drawn up in Finnish, Swedish or English and must include the following enclosures:

1. A study plan
2. A research proposal, including a funding plan
3. A supporting statement by the dissertation supervisor(s)

Applications must be accompanied by certificates of previous studies and language proficiency, as specified in item 3 above. Applicants can also submit other enclosures to demonstrate that they have the knowledge and skills required to complete a doctoral degree.

The Administrative Procedure Act (434/2003) stipulates that applicants must be provided a reasonable period to supplement a deficient application. Applicants have two weeks to supplement a deficient application.

6. Granting the right to complete a degree

The steering group of each doctoral programme assesses the applications of all applicants to the programme who meet the formal requirements. The steering group then draws up an admission proposal for the faculty's decision-making. This proposal indicates the names of the admitted and rejected applicants, together with the reasons for each decision, as well as the title of the doctoral degree pursued, the study track (if any), and the names of the supervising professor and the supervisor(s). The faculty responsible for the target degree decides whether to admit an applicant to complete the degree.

7. Target degrees

The primary postgraduate degree offered at the University of Helsinki is a doctoral degree. The right to pursue postgraduate studies is always requested and granted with a doctoral degree as the primary goal (Table 1). However, a Licentiate degree can also be completed in the disciplines represented by each doctoral programme.

Table 1. Faculties which grant the right to complete a doctoral degree in one of the doctoral programmes of the Doctoral School in Natural Sciences as well as the relevant degree titles

Doctoral programme	Faculty	Degree*
Doctoral Programme in Particle Physics and Universe Science (PAPU)	Faculty of Science	DPhil
Doctoral Programme in Geosciences (GEODOC)	Faculty of Science	DPhil
	Faculty of Arts	DPhil
Doctoral Programme in Atmospheric Sciences (ATM-DP)	Faculty of Science	DPhil
	Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry	DPhil, DSc (Agr&For)
	Faculty of Biological and Environmental Sciences	DPhil
Doctoral Programme in Chemistry and Molecular Sciences (CHEMS)	Faculty of Science	DPhil
	Faculty of Pharmacy	DPhil, DPhil (Pharm)
Doctoral Programme in Mathematics and Statistics (DOMAST)	Faculty of Science	DPhil
Doctoral Programme in Materials Research and Nanosciences (MATRENA)	Faculty of Science	DPhil
	Faculty of Pharmacy	DPhil, DPhil (Pharm)
Doctoral Programme in Computer Science (DOCS)	Faculty of Science	DPhil

* DPhil = Doctor of Philosophy; DSc (Agr&For) = Doctor of Science (Agriculture and Forestry); DPhil (Pharm) = Doctor of Philosophy (Pharmacy)

8. Announcement of admission results and acceptance of a place offer

Section 38 of the Universities Act states that applicants may accept only one place in a degree programme that leads to an academic degree and begins in the same term.

The faculty responsible for the target degree must announce the admission results and the reasons for its decisions to the applicants. Those admitted must accept their place in the manner indicated by the University. Admitted students who fail to notify the University of their acceptance of a place and to submit the relevant documents by the date determined by the University will lose their right to pursue studies.

9. Appeals

A decision not to offer a place to an applicant will be accompanied by information on the appeals procedure, as referred to in sections 82 and 83 of the Universities Act.