

How to 'PhD' at Lund University (2017 Edition)

1: Introduction

Hej och välkommen till Lunds universitet!

There are a lot of new things to consider when you begin a PhD at Lund University, especially if you are new to the university or even the country! This guide aims to put lots of useful information into one place so it is there to refer back to during your studies. It is not fully extensive so there may be gaps and omissions. The guide is aimed at all new PhD students (especially those who may be unfamiliar with Sweden) at the Faculty of Science, so will not focus on department specific details.

Any further questions (or suggestions on how to improve this guide!), feel free to email us at: ndr@ldk.lu.se .

It is also possible to direct questions to the relevant people in your department or with any of the other help sources listed throughout the booklet.

1.1: The Faculty of Science

You have been admitted to the Faculty of Science. As of 2016 there were 3600 students, 945 employees and 283 PhD students. The education and research activities are carried out at ten departments and equivalent units, based in the northern part of the university campus. The Faculty holds a compulsory PhD Introduction Course once per year which introduces a number of key staff members and provides more information about completing your PhD studies.

The office for the Faculty of Science administration is Astronomihuset, Sölvegatan 27, Lund.

1.2: Who we are

This guide is compiled by the NDR working committee. The NDR is the Science Doctoral Student Council. We are six PhD students from different departments at the faculty and we work with issues raised at our annual NDR meeting, as well as discuss other questions that comes up at faculty level. We also organize social events for PhD students at the faculty.

You can find more information about us on the following page: <http://www.ldk.lu.se/ndr>

The NDR then forms part of LDK (Lunds Doctoral Student Union). By joining LDK (ldk.lu.se), you become a member of the council representing the doctoral students at your faculty, and

you will get the student card (Studentkortet) containing various discounts. The membership fee is 150 kr per year. It is also possible to join LDK alongside one of the other student nations (nation membership cost 210kr). The undergraduate union at the Faculty of Science is called LUNA and the overall undergraduate union for the university is called LUS.

Studentlund is the overall provider of the Studentkort and the mother organisation of all student life in Lund. For instance, LDK is part of Studentlund as is LUS and LUNA.

2: Technical Details about your employment

During your time as a PhD student you have to complete 240 higher education credits, of which 60 are for theoretical courses. It is expected to take 4 years to complete full time but if you take on other responsibilities such as teaching or becoming part of a board you can get prolongation.

Dependent on how you are employed (grant or studentship) and what department employs you, you will be paid a different salary so these details will not be discussed here. If you have any question speak to the finance team at your department.

2.1: Study plan

It is compulsory to complete a study plan on your arrival, and update it at least once per year. This effectively becomes a contract about what work and departmental responsibilities you will take whilst a PhD student. It also keeps track of how many credits you have completed. There are occasionally courses with advice on how to complete your study plan.

There will be a course run by the NDR about how to complete the individual study plan in 13th November 2017. Please check our webpage or Facebook group for more information.

Information about how to complete your study plan can be found here (split by each department in the Faculty of Science): <http://www.science.lu.se/for-employees/education-and-research/postgraduate-studies> .

2.2: Registering holiday

In general, the days of annual leave given to employees by the university is listed below. However, this can vary. For instance, if you are completing your PhD studies with a scholarship. Confirm your amount of holiday with your department.

- 28 days until the year you turn 29
- 31 days as of the year you turn 30
- 35 days as of the year you turn 40

Holidays are registered on Primula Web (<https://primweb.adm.lu.se/>).

Most lecturers take 4 weeks after Midsummer, although usually PhD students are more sporadic. However, Swedes like a healthy work-life balance so you will be encouraged to take all your holidays; you are only allowed to carry forward a small amount of days into the following year (this number varies by department). You must check with your supervisor before registering your holiday days.

2.3: Sick leave

Sick leave is also registered via Primula Web once you return. Be sure to register even one day if you are ill as they will all count towards your prolongation at the end of your studies. However, the process is different if you are a grant student, speak to your departmental HR team if you are unsure.

2.4: Medical Information

Once you have received a personal number (see section 3.1) you are eligible to the same access to healthcare as a Swedish citizen.

The university will also reimburse the costs of medical appointments. It may also be possible to be reimbursed for the cost of your prescriptions, to do this you must save your receipts from collecting and paying for the prescription. Speak with your departments HR administrator to find out more.

2.5: Insurance

The university covers your insurance whilst at work and from your journey to and from work.

It is also a good idea to get social insurance whilst you are here. Försäkringskassan is the Swedish Social Insurance Agency. The benefits offered include child allowance, parental benefits, employment-based benefits, pregnancy benefits and a temporary parental allowance.

2.6: Parental leave

In Sweden, you are entitled to full parental leave until your child is eighteen months old. Parental benefit, which allows you to stay at home with your child, is paid for a total of 480 days per child. As a parent, you are also entitled to reduce your working hours by up to a quarter of normal working hours until the child has turned twelve.

2.7: Child sickness

You are entitled to stay at home with a sick child under 12. If a child has special needs this can be paid out beyond the age of 12 years. When you need to stay home to care for a sick child, you need to report this to your contact person at your workplace. Once you return from leave, you must register your application for temporary parental benefit in Primula Web. You will receive compensation from Försäkringskassan. Compensation for this just under 80% of your normal income, up to SEK 27 800 a month.

2.8: Travel

If you travel abroad as part of your PhD, for example conferences, summer schools or lab work, your health insurance is covered by Lund University. In order for this to be valid you need to carry a Swedish State Business Travel Insurance Certificate. Ask your departments HR team. You are also insured by the university whilst at work and on your way to and from work.

When booking flights for your work they must be booked through the travel agency Egencia (<https://www.egencia.com/public/se/>). You must first make a profile with them, linking you to Lund University.

2.9: Prolongation

As a compensation for the time you spend teaching or doing departmental or representative duties, you get prolongation. This ensures that you do not lose any time for your research. You can teach up to 20% of your total hours – representative duties do not count into these 20%.

Your teaching prolongation is handled by your HR administrator. However, it is recommended that you track your teaching hours yourself as well. The same goes for representative duties, which should be tracked by yourself and the union that elected you (NDR in most cases). You are responsible for registering this prolongation with your HR administrator latest at the end of your 4-year employment.

2.10: Registering credits

Credits you gain are to be reported to Ladok yourself, if they are obtained from outside the department. In order to register your credits please contact your study administrator.

2.11: Registering as a student

You need to register as a student on LADOK system every semester. It is simple, and just requires you to log on and tick a box.

2.12: Doctoral Ombudsman

The Doctoral Student Ombudsman is provided by LDK. The job of the ombudsman is to assist PhD students at Lund University if they come into challenges during their studies. The role of the ombudsman is to offer support and guidance to students who may feel that University officials have acted in violation of their rights. The ombudsman is able to offer everything from information and advice to investigations and to act as a representative or facilitator in contacts with the university. You choose if you just want to inform yourself of your rights or if you also want help in placing a formal complaint with whom it may concern.

The current ombudsman is Aleksandra Popovic and you are able to contact her by the following email: domb@ldk.lu.se . Contacting the ombudsman is confidential and free of charge.

2.13: Other employment benefits

You are entitled to be reimbursed on the cost of a gym membership (SEK 1870). Commonly, people use it to join the university's gym Gerdahallen (<http://gerdahallen.lu.se>) but it is also possible to use the money for a membership to a different gym or sporting club. You are also able to take the opportunity to undertake a physical activity (such as a gym class) during working hours up to a maximum of 60 minutes per week for full-time employees. Read more here- <http://www.staff.lu.se/employment/work-environment-and-health/health-and-wellness/health-promotion>.

If you spend more than an hour a day working at a computer and find normal glasses are not sufficient at eliminating eye problems, Lund University is legally obliged to provide special glasses for computer work. There is an agreement in place with the optician branch Synoptik, to provide eye tests and the computer glasses if they are deemed necessary. If you feel like these glasses may be necessary for you speak to your head of department and complete the following form- <http://www.staff.lu.se/sites/staff.lu.se/files/synoptik-eng.pdf> .

2.14 Unemployment

If you intend to stay in Sweden after you leave, you can register for unemployment benefits, whilst you look for work after you defend. To do this you must join the union SULF, which will give you basic unemployment money per month and AEA which will top it up to 80% of the salary you were paid whilst working. To be eligible for this you must join these unions at least one year before you become unemployed.

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3: Living in Sweden

3.1: Life in Lund

If you are an international student, an important first step is to apply for a personnummer (personal number). You can apply for it at Skatteverket (the tax office), the address in Lund is Stora Södergatan 45. Once you have received a personnummer, the next step is to apply for an identitetskort (Swedish ID card), which you can do at the Skatteverket in Malmö, which is located at Kattsundsgatan 7. You are unable to open a Swedish bank account easily (if at all) without a Swedish ID card.

With regards to travelling around Lund (and further around Skåne), there are a number of options. The bus and train service (run by Skånetrafiken) run regularly and until reasonably late around the city and beyond. You cannot pay by cash on the bus and although you can pay by card on board the easiest and cheapest way to pay is to use a Jojo card (<https://www.skånetrafiken.se/sa-reser-du-med-oss/jojo-kort/>) or download the Skånetrafiken app which allows you to buy tickets straight to your phone.

Cycling is a very popular common way to get around Lund. Very cheap bikes can be picked up from the police auctions that happen regularly in Lund (<https://www.lund.se/trafik--stadsplanering/cykla-i-lund/cykelauktion/>). There are free air pumps throughout the city for your bike tyres too.

Accommodation can be difficult to obtain in Sweden compared to some other countries but there are resources that can make it easier. Both BoPoolen (<http://bopoolen.nu/en/>) and Blocket (<https://www.blocket.se>) allow you to both post adverts looking for housing and browse adverts of people looking for tenants. AF Bostäder (<https://www.afbostader.se/en/>) is the Lund University student housing company. Even though PhD students are employees in Sweden they are eligible to join the housing queue if they are a member of Studentlund (that is they are registered with a nation or LDK). The queue times can be long (~ 1 year), but shorter for a corridor room than for an apartment.

Other websites that may be worth signing up to (although some may have long queue times for apartments) include:

LKF: <https://www.lkf.se/>

Apartments owned and rented by the municipality of Lund, with the aim to offer quality housing at a reasonable price. Queue times can be very long however. There is a similar scheme in Malmö too called MKB (<https://www.mkbfastighet.se>).

Boplats syd: <https://www.boplatssyd.se>

The official site for rental properties in Malmö official site but also has several other municipalities in Skåne included too. It costs 300 SEK for a year and usually has many apartments but again it can take time to get an apartment.

Krebo: <http://krebo.se/lund/>

A company that has a number of student apartments in Eastern Lund.

Heimstaden: <https://heimstaden.com/>

One of the largest residential real estate companies in Scandinavia. Queue times can still be long but shorter than LKF or MKB.

Ikano: <https://www.ikanobostad.se/>

another company that manages and rents properties. You need to log into the site once every two months to keep your application active.

3.2: Language courses

If you are not a Swedish speaker, the university offers courses in Swedish called 'Swedish for university staff'. The cost of the courses is covered by your department. The relevant webpage and information about how to apply is linked here:

<http://www.staff.lu.se/employment/for-international-staff/swedish-for-university-staff-sfu> .

Courses can also be undertaken outside of the university (also at no cost to yourself) as part of the Swedish for immigrants (SFI) initiative. The classes can be more flexible with SFI, for instance they offer distance learning. For more information, visit here: <https://www.lund.se/komvux-lund/utbildningar/swedish-for-immigrants/> .

3.3: Swedish Holidays

If you have moved to Sweden from abroad, the bank holidays celebrated (or röda dagar in Swedish, literal translation= red days) will be different to those you are used to. These are days you are not required to work, and will explain why your department might be very empty on these days. Note that these are the 2017 dates and some dates may change each year. See the university webpage on holidays for the most up to date information (<http://www.lunduniversity.lu.se/international-admissions/why-study-at-lund-university/academic-calendar>)

New Year's Day (Nyårsdagen): 1 January

Epiphany (Trettondagen): 6 January

Good Friday (Långfredagen): 14 April

Easter Sunday (Påskdagen): 16 April

Easter Monday (Annandag påsk): 17 April

Walpurgis Night (Valborgsmässoafton): 30 April - *note that this is an evening celebration and does not necessarily mean a whole day of holiday, please check with your department.*

Labour Day: 1 May

Ascension Day (Kristi himmelfärds dag): 25 May

Sweden's National Day: 6 June

Midsummer Eve (Midsommarafton): 23 June

Midsummer Day (Midsommardagen): 24 June

All Saints' Day (Alla Helgons Dag): 4 November

Christmas Eve (Julafton): 24 December

Christmas Day (Juldagen): 25 December

Boxing Day (Annandagen): 26 December

New Year's Eve (Nyårsafton): 31 December

4: Useful dictionary of acronyms

DOMB: Doctoral Student Ombudsman

HR: Human Resources

LDK: Lunds Doctoral Student Union

LKF: The municipality of Lund rental housing

LUNA: Lunds Naturvetarkår (Faculty of Science student union for undergraduate and master students)

LUS: Lunds Universitets Studentkårer (Lund University Student Unions)

MKB: The municipality of Malmö rental housing

NDR: The Science Doctoral Student Council