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Regulations for Programme Review

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Adopted by	President
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Replaces document	Regulations for programme reviews, ref. no. SU FV-3963-24, adopted on 4 December 2024.
Responsible administrative department	Office of the President
Responsible administrators	Anna-Karin Björling and Camilla Norrbin

Description
Programme review is a quality assurance activity within Stockholm University's quality system for education. This document sets out the University's regulations for these reviews.

Disclaimer: This document is a translation of the Swedish original "Regler för utbildningsgranskning". In case of a discrepancy between the Swedish original and the English translation, the Swedish original will prevail.

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Purpose and Scope

Stockholm University has processes in place for the regular review and follow-up of education and research, aimed at ensuring quality and developing its activities. Programme review is one of the quality assurance activities within the quality system for education. This document describes the University's regulations for programme review.

Programme reviews aim to ensure and develop the quality of all credit-bearing study programmes and courses, hereinafter referred to as "programmes". The focus of the reviews is on the conditions, procedures and processes relating to the planning, delivery and follow-up of programmes.

Overall Responsibility

The President decides on the regulations for programme reviews in accordance with "Besluts- och delegationsordning för Stockholms universitet".

The President's Advisory Board for University-Wide Educational Issues and Systems for Quality Assurance (Rektors beredning för universitetsgemensamma utbildningsfrågor och system för kvalitetssäkring, or Rebus) is responsible, in accordance with the President's decision (ref. no. SU FV-0293-21), for preparing regulations governing programme reviews. Rebus also serves as a forum for dialogue and consultation in the implementation of the university-wide regulations for programme review.

The scientific area board has overall responsibility for the planning, implementation and follow-up of programme reviews. The scientific area board also decides on procedures, templates and other supporting materials for programme reviews. See "Besluts- och delegationsordning för Stockholms universitet".

The Office of the President is responsible for monitoring the Regulations for Programme Review.

General Regulations

All credit-bearing programmes must undergo peer review within a six-year cycle. Each cycle must be coordinated across the scientific areas so that it begins and ends at the same time. Between each six-year cycle, there must be one year set aside for the analysis and follow-up of the previous cycle, as well as for planning the next one.

The reviewers must have research competence and be employed by Stockholm University. Reviewers with other relevant backgrounds or employment may also be included where necessary.

The scientific area board decides on a timetable for each review cycle. The scientific area board also decides how the programmes are to be divided and grouped for the review.

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Reviews of degree programmes offered by departments within both scientific areas shall be carried out in consultation between the scientific area boards.

Exceptions

During a review cycle, the scientific area board may decide to postpone or exempt a specific programme from programme review in cases where the programme is included in the Swedish Higher Education Authority's (UKÄ) programme evaluations or where the programme is due to undergo external accreditation. For the same reasons, the scientific area board may decide to carry out a limited programme review, which involves a review based on a selection of the quality criteria described below.

The scientific area board may also, where there are special reasons, decide on a tailored process, including the adaptation or selection of quality criteria, for the review of certain programmes, such as programmes that do not lead to a degree, for example the Supplementary Training Programme for Foreign-Educated Teachers (Utlandsutbildade lärares vidareutbildning, ULV) and the Supplementary Training Programme for Teachers (Vidareutbildning av lärare, VAL). The procedures for such an adapted programme review are decided by the scientific area board and reported in the annual quality report to the President and during the quality dialogue with the President.

Programmes that form part of a collaboration with other national or international higher education institutions are reviewed in accordance with an agreement between the institutions.

Where a decision has been taken to discontinue a main field of study, a professional degree programme or a third-cycle subject area, the programme is exempt from review.

Quality Criteria

Programmes shall be assessed on the basis of quality criteria drawn up in accordance with the Higher Education Act (1992:1434), the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100) and the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

Quality criteria for first-cycle and second-cycle programmes

1. **Research and educational environment**. The programme has strong research basis and is based on disciplinary foundation and proven experience. The educational environment and infrastructure are appropriate. A forecast for the coming five-year period shows that teaching staff competence is sufficient to deliver the programme.

2. **Learning outcomes**. The programme's design, implementation and assessment ensure that students are given the opportunity to achieve the qualitative targets. The department works systematically to ensure student-centred learning within the programme.

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3. **Student support**. Students are provided with the conditions necessary to complete the programme within the planned duration of study. This includes ensuring that study administration and counselling are effective, that supervision and procedures for degree projects are adequate, that widening participation is promoted, and that the department offers study support for students with disabilities where required.

4. **Internal quality assurance**. The department works systematically on follow-up and quality development of the programme. The programme prepares students to face a changing world of work. The department works to ensure that students actively participate in designing their programmes and influence their study situation. The department encourages, supports and facilitates students to get involved in work on student influence.

Quality criteria for third cycle level programmes

1. **Research and teaching environment.** The programme is delivered to a high academic standard and covers a broad range of subject areas. The teaching environment and infrastructure are appropriate, and each doctoral student has access to a sufficient community of doctoral students. A forecast for the coming five-year period indicates that there are sufficient teaching and supervision resources to deliver the programme.

2. **Degree objectives.** The programme's design, implementation and assessment ensure that doctoral students are given the opportunity to achieve the qualitative targets. The individual study plan is used in an appropriate and systematic manner to plan and monitor each doctoral student's studies in relation to the degree objectives and ensures student-centred learning.

3. **Support for doctoral students.** Doctoral students are provided with the conditions necessary to complete their programme within the planned duration of study. This includes ensuring that study administration and counselling are effective, that supervision and procedures related to thesis work are adequate, and that the department promote widening participation and offers study support for students with disabilities where required.

4. **Internal quality assurance.** The department works systematically on follow-up and quality development of the programme. The programme prepares doctoral students to face a changing world of work. The department works to ensure that doctoral students actively participate in designing their programmes and influence their study situation. The department encourages, supports and facilitates doctoral students to get involved in work on student influence.

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Student Representation

The students' union shall be offered the opportunity to appoint student representatives to all stages of the programme reviews in accordance with the "Regulations for Student Influence".

Review Process

This section provides an overview of the various stages of the review process. See also Figure 1 below.

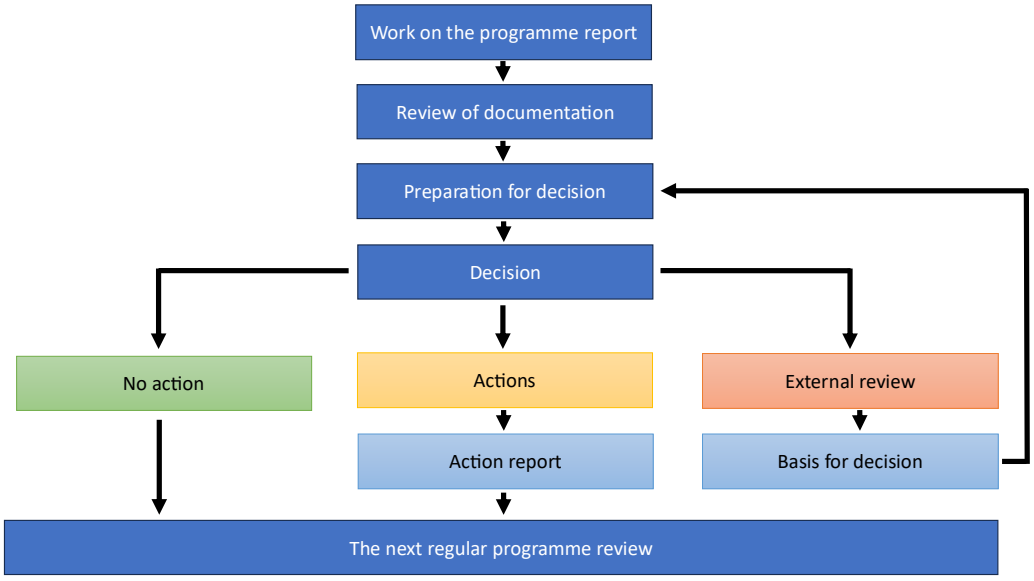


Figure 1. The various stages of the review process.

Work on the programme report

The department prepares a programme report and other supporting documentation.

Review of documentation

The reviewers prepare a basis for a decision based on the programme report and other documents.

Dialogues between reviewers, including student representatives, and the department form part of the review process. Student representatives who have participated in the work on the programme report at the department shall also be offered the opportunity to take part in these dialogues.

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The reviewers' proposals
Based on the quality criteria, the reviewers may propose actions to improve quality and develop the programme. The reviewers may also propose that an external review be carried out.

Preparation for decision
Before the reviewers conclude their work, the department and the relevant student representatives shall be given the opportunity to comment on any factual errors or ambiguities in the reviewers' documentation for decision.

Proposals for decision on programmes involving departments from both scientific areas shall be drawn up in consultation between the scientific area boards.

Decision and subsequent dialogue
Once the review has been completed, the scientific area board shall decide whether no action needs to be taken or whether action needs to be taken. The scientific area board may decide that an external review should be carried out. The scientific area board may also decide to discontinue the programme.

The scientific area board's decision shall be provided to the responsible department, as well as to the reviewers and student representatives.

Once the scientific area board has taken a decision on the matter, a dialogue shall take place between the relevant stakeholders involved in the programme reviews.

External review
The scientific area board decides whether an external review of a programme is to be carried out. This decision may be taken at any time during the ongoing review process.

The scientific area board also decides on
- the process for external review,
- the appointment of at least two externally appointed reviewers with research competence, and
- the form of follow-up and feedback to the department, as well as any actions to be taken once the external review is complete.

Action report
A department required to implement actions must submit a report on the actions taken within a specified timeframe.

If the follow-up of the actions reveals persistent quality deficiencies, the decision-making body shall decide on further actions.

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Publication and Reporting

Decision taken by the scientific area board following a programme review and decision on the approval of an action report shall be published on the University's website. Decision following an external review shall also be published on the University's website.

A summary of the results of the programme review shall be reported in the scientific area board's annual quality report to the President.