Policy and regulations for scholarship funding for maintenance during studies or for professional development after the completion of a doctoral degree

Background
The Vice-Chancellor took a decision on 3 March 2011 on a policy and regulations for scholarship funding for maintenance during studies or for professional development after the completion of a doctoral degree (LS 2012/68). Against the background of the University management having taken a decision on new admission rules (in which scholarships as study finance are a part) there is a need to adjust the regulations to harmonise them with the new decision.

In addition, it has been pointed out that, because of the Euro exchange rate, Erasmus Mundus Action 2 (an EU-funded scholarship programme which aims to increase mobility with selected regions outside the EU) can at times entail that these scholarships are below the lowest amount allowed in the regulations.

Against this background, it is proposed that these scholarships be allowed to deviate from the regulations.

The University Board has entrusted the Vice-Chancellor with a review of the minimum levels for scholarships at Lund University. The result of this review will be presented to the University Board in June 2014.

As the implementation of the electronic support system and the construction of a new homepage with the aim of facilitating the management of scholarships were only completed in spring 2013, it is suggested that the evaluation of the regulations be postponed.

Information according to Section 19 of the Employment (Co-Determination in the Workplace) Act was provided on 20 June 2013.

Decision
The University decides to revise and adopt the attached policy and regulations for scholarship funding for studies or for professional development after the completion of a doctoral degree.

An evaluation will be carried out by 1 April 2015 at the latest.

A decision on this matter was taken by the undersigned Deputy Vice-Chancellor in the presence of Head of Administration Susanne Kristensson following a presentation by Labour Law Adviser Kristine Widlund. Human Resources Consultant Marie Fernbrant also participated in processing the proposal.
Eva Wiberg

Kristine Widlund
(Human Resources)

CC:
Deans
Heads of faculty offices
Human resources managers
Saco-S
OFR/S
SEKO
Human Resources Division
Rules and Regulations
Policy and regulations for scholarship funding for maintenance during studies or for professional development after the completion of a doctoral degree

Supported by Chapter 2, Section 5 of the Higher Education Act, Lund University decides to adopt the following policy and regulations.

Policy

Education at Lund University as well as professional development within research after the award of a PhD degree is first and foremost to be funded through student finance, doctoral studentships, postdoctoral fellowships or research positions at the post-doctoral level. Scholarships to students are, however, established as funding for maintenance both internationally and nationally and strengthen opportunities for internationalisation. Such funding provides weaker social security coverage than that afforded by ordinary student finance and employment. Scholarship funding is therefore to be avoided wherever possible. Insofar as scholarships are used for maintenance during studies/professional development within research, the recipient of the scholarship is to be treated equally as far as possible during his or her stay at Lund University and is to enjoy equal conditions compared to students/researchers in an equivalent position but with other sources of funding.

Scholarships during research studies are to be avoided as much as possible. Efforts should aim to reduce scholarship funding in favour of doctoral studentships. In contacts with funders, the advantages of appointments are to be emphasised. In cases where scholarship funding occurs nevertheless, agreement should be reached with the funder on the possibility of extending the scholarship to ensure that the doctoral student will be able to complete his or her studies even in case of illness or parental leave. Such an agreement should be reached at the time of the establishment of the agreement on scholarship funding. In addition, the agreement should also include a subsequent increase in the amount of the scholarship to match the salary increase received by students on doctoral studentships. In discussions on funding, the importance of financial support for insurance should be pointed out.

Scholarships for postdoctoral professional development, established and/or paid out via Lund University, entail a risk that the Swedish Tax Agency might consider the scholarship as remuneration for work carried out on behalf of Lund University (salary). Such assessments always take place retroactively and lead to taxation for both the scholarship recipient and the University. This type of assessment can entail that the individual or his or her union may successfully insist on the scholarship recipient being employed until further notice by the University. The risk of scholarships being equated with remuneration increases if the scholarship is awarded to an employee, someone formerly employed in the past two years or if
the scholarship recipient is appointed in direct connection to a period covered by a scholarship. Thus each decision on scholarships for postdoctoral professional development must be carefully considered.

The aim of the regulations below is to ensure consistent and fair treatment of students admitted to a first-, second- or third-cycle study programme or who are at the University for career development within research after earning a PhD degree, and who have scholarships as a main source of maintenance. In addition, the regulations are to ensure that scholarship recipients get adequate information on their studies/equivalent and on the conditions that apply and that they are given advice with regard to issues such as insurance. Moreover, to the extent possible, the regulations exist to prevent unintended tax and labour law consequences that can arise retroactively.

**Regulations**

The regulations concern scholarships intended as the principal source of maintenance during education or in professional development in research. The regulations cover:

- the establishment of scholarships
- scholarships that are administrated (paid out) via Lund University (see below)
- scholarships that are awarded and paid out by an external funder to a scholarship recipient for the purposes indicated above.

**Limitations**

- The regulations do not cover scholarships to fund fees for first- and second-cycle studies.

**Definitions**

*Postdoctoral scholarship:* a scholarship awarded for professional development in research within a three year period after the completion of a PhD degree.¹

*External scholarship:* a scholarship awarded directly to the recipient from the funder.

*Established scholarship:* Lund University decides to use funds awarded by an external funder to set up a scholarship as the principal source of maintenance for students admitted to programmes other than those in the third cycle, or for professional development in research after the award of a PhD degree.

*Scholarship administrated via Lund University:* the University pays out a scholarship with funds originating with an external funder. According to information from the Swedish Tax Agency, this type of scholarship is to be equated with a scholarship established by the University; it therefore entails the same risk of being considered as remuneration for work, as is the case with the established scholarship.²

¹ Scholarships for professional development in research can also arise more than three years after the completion of a PhD degree, e.g. in order to acquire specific knowledge at another higher education institution.

² In the case of the Erasmus Mundus scholarships, the EU is considered to be the funder.
The call for applications is to specify whether departmental duties may be included in the advertised position.

**General regulations**

Only persons admitted to first/second/third cycle programmes or for professional development after earning their PhD degrees may stay at the University with a scholarship as their main source of maintenance.

A scholarship is **not to constitute remuneration for work** carried out for the University.

A scholarship may only be **established for a person admitted to a programme (although not in the third cycle) or for professional development in research after the award of a PhD degree.**

Scholarships that the University **establishes** are to be **advertised.**

**Compensation in addition to the scholarship** may be paid out only for costs that are associated with the completion of the programme such as travel to a conference.

**Scholarships for education established by the University**

Scholarships are to be established by the **faculty boards.** Such decisions may be delegated to the dean but not further. Government funding may not be used for scholarships in the first and second cycles of study.

**Scholarship recipients are to receive their scholarship established/administrated by Lund University in monthly instalments.**

**Scholarships for third-cycle education (doctoral students admitted to programmes at Lund University)**

Scholarships may not be **established for third cycle education.**

Government funding may not be used to finance scholarships for third cycle studies. This includes direct government funding of research and third cycle studies as well as other government funding allocated via a public authority.

**Doctoral students may be admitted to research programmes with an external scholarship.**

*The decision* on whether a person is to be financed with an external scholarship during third cycle studies is taken by the faculty board. The decision may be delegated to another body at the faculty level such as the research studies board, the dean or the vice-dean responsible for third cycle studies, but not further.

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3 Admission rules for third cycle education at Lund University. Reg. no LS 2012/719
4 Public service agreement for the 2013 financial year regarding universities and university colleges, Government decision 13 December 2012.
5 Admission rules for third cycle education at Lund University. Reg. no LS 2012/719
The amount of the scholarship is to be equivalent to at least 28 per cent of the applicable base amount, with the exception of Erasmus Mundus scholarship recipients in cases where the Euro exchange rate is temporarily such that the minimum level is not reached.

A letter of invitation/equivalent as a basis for e.g. residence permit applications is to be signed by the dean. The signature of the letter may be delegated to the head of department but not further.

The doctoral student is to be given written information on the implications of scholarship funding for insurance, leave, illness and suchlike. Information on the forms under which studies can be undertaken is to be given to the applicant before the decision on admission is taken. This is also to include information on the types of insurance cover doctoral students themselves are responsible for obtaining. The doctoral student is to confirm in writing that he or she has received this information.

A written agreement between the faculty and the doctoral student is to be signed before the scholarship recipient begins studying at the University. Information on the applicable social insurance conditions is to be presented in the agreement.

The doctoral student is to be guaranteed a good working environment. The head of department’s responsibility for the work environment also covers scholarship recipients. The head of department is to be aware of the doctoral student and his/her studies/professional development within the department.

Doctoral students funded by scholarships are to be given access to the University’s occupational health service.

The doctoral student is to be registered in Ladok in connection with the start of the scholarship recipient’s studies at the University.

The doctoral student is to be given an introduction and information by both the University’s central administration and the host faculty/department.

The host faculty (dean or other by delegation from the dean) and the department (head of department) are responsible for planning the study programme, ensuring the social conditions and for continuously following up the doctoral student’s development/goal attainment. The dean or the head of department is also responsible for any consequences that a wrong decision can entail.

Scholarships for third cycle education and for cases when the scholarship recipient is admitted to a programme at another higher education institution
In the case of national and international exchanges (where the PhD degree is awarded at another higher education institution, nationally or internationally) a written agreement between the higher education institution in question and Lund University is to be drawn up before the scholarship recipient starts his or her studies at Lund University.

The doctoral student is to be registered in Ladok. This applies to doctoral students from other higher education institutions that take part in courses or that are supervised at Lund University during part of their studies.
Scholarships for professional development in research after the award of a PhD degree (post-doctoral studies)

Scholarships established by Lund University (internal scholarship)

Scholarships are to be established by the faculty board. The decision may be delegated to the dean, but not further.

A scholarship established by the University is not to exceed 60 per cent per month of the applicable base amount, except in exceptional cases.

A scholarship which is established by the University may be paid out to the same person for a maximum of 24 months.\(^6\)

A person who has received a scholarship for professional development established by Lund University may not be employed in connection with the completed scholarship period.\(^7\)

External scholarship

A scholarship that is paid by an external funder directly to the recipient can continue for a period exceeding 24 months on condition that it was intended to last for a definite period which is longer than 24 months at the time it was advertised and that the conditions are fair, which is to be judged by the head of department by delegation from the dean. An external scholarship is not permitted to be associated with demands from the funder for the doctoral student to perform work duties during his or her research studies.

The decision to take on a scholarship recipient for professional development within research is made by the dean. The decision can be delegated to the head of department, but not further.

A person who has been awarded a scholarship for professional development paid by Lund University may not be appointed to employment in connection with the completed period of the scholarship.\(^8\)

A scholarship must amount to at least 40 per cent per month of the applicable base amount\(^9\), with the exception of Erasmus Mundus scholarships in cases where the Euro exchange rate temporarily means that the scholarship does not meet the minimum level.

\(^6\) In the case of scholarships lasting more than two years, there is a risk that the scholarship will be considered as a periodical allowance which can lead to it being subject to retroactive taxation.

\(^7\) There is a risk that the scholarship will be considered as remuneration for work to be carried out on behalf of the payer. A postdoctoral scholarship established at Lund University can for example not be followed by an appointment.

\(^8\) There is a risk that the scholarship will be considered as remuneration for work to be carried out on behalf of the payer. A postdoctoral scholarship paid out by Lund University can for example not be followed by an appointment.

\(^9\) The increased base amount for 2013 is SEK 45 400.
General provisions concerning scholarships for professional development in research after completion of a doctoral degree (post-doctoral).

A letter of invitation/equivalent as a basis for e.g. residence permit applications is to be signed by the dean. The signature of the letter may be delegated to the head of department but not further.

The scholarship recipient is to be given written information on the implications of scholarship funding with regard to insurance, leave, illness and suchlike. Information on the forms under which studies can be undertaken with regard to leave, summer break and so on is to be given to the intended recipient before the decision on acceptance is taken. This is also to include information on the types of insurance the scholarship recipient him/herself should consider.

A written agreement is to be signed between the department and the scholarship recipient before the recipient begins his or her professional development at the University. This agreement is to include a plan for the scholarship recipient’s professional development, funding, length of stay and information on the applicable social insurance conditions.

The scholarship recipient is to be guaranteed a good working environment. The head of department’s responsibility for the working environment also covers scholarship recipients. The head of department is to be aware of the scholarship recipient and his or her studies/professional development within the department.

The scholarship recipient is to be given access to the University’s occupational health service and the opportunity to take part in qualifying training courses. Costs for occupational health services and courses are to be carried by the department in which the scholarship recipient is registered.

The scholarship recipient is to be registered in Primula in connection with the start of his or her professional development within the University.

The scholarship recipient is to receive the scholarship that is established/administrated by Lund University in advance instalments, usually for a three month period.

The scholarship recipient is to be given an introduction and information by both the University’s central administration and the host faculty/department.

The host faculty (the dean or other by delegation from the dean) and the department (head of department) are responsible for planning the professional/career development, ensuring the social conditions and continuously following up the scholarship recipient’s development/goal attainment. The dean or the head of department is also responsible for any consequences that a wrong decision can entail.

In connection with the registration of the scholarship recipient, the University is to sign a special personal injury insurance (SPS) policy (which covers travel to and from work as well as time spent at the workplace).

Follow-up and evaluation of the regulations is to be carried out at the latest by 1 April 2015.
Entry into force and transitional provisions
The present regulations enter into force on 1 July 2013 when the University’s currently applicable Policy and regulations for scholarship funding for maintenance during studies or for personal and professional development after the completion of a doctoral degree (Reg. no LS 2010/68 A13) cease to apply.