



To:
Departments at the Faculty of Medicine

Regulations for Reference Group and Reference Person

According to *Rules for doctoral education at Umeå University* (FS 1.1-334-21), each doctoral student admitted after January 1, 2014, should have access to a reference group and a reference person:

- Doctoral students admitted after January 1, 2014, should have access to a reference group. Normally, at least two of the supervisors and at least one scientifically merited teacher, without connection to the doctoral student's research project, should be included in the reference group.
- The reference group should follow up on the individual study plan at a formalized meeting with the doctoral student at least once a year.

After a decision by the Dean on June 22, 2022, all doctoral students at the Faculty of Medicine should have a reference person independent of the dissertation project. The assignment could previously be held by the examiner, but it is no longer possible. It is recommended that the reference person is from another department and/or faculty than the one where the doctoral student is admitted. The reference person should be part of the reference group and should, according to the university-wide regulations above, be scientifically merited (i.e., have a PhD).

From previous employee surveys, we know that doctoral students rate their work environment as unsatisfactory. After Karin Röding's report on misconduct and equal conditions at Umeå University, the university's management has emphasized that work to strengthen doctoral students work environment, in all respects where this is possible, is highly prioritized. Access to a reference person independent of the dissertation project is part of this work. The assignment as a reference person resembles a mentor assignment and aims to broaden the doctoral student's network within academia. In addition to participating in the annual follow up, the doctoral student and reference person can have additional contact regarding work environment and career issues.

The doctoral student chooses, with the support of the main supervisor, head of department, and, if necessary, the faculty's director of doctoral studies, a suitable reference person. Teachers at the faculty are expected to take on the assignment.

The composition of the reference group should follow the recommendations in the university-wide regulation. The composition of the reference group should be described in the doctoral student's individual study plan.

By July 1, 2023, at the latest, all doctoral students should have a named reference person independent of the dissertation project noted in their ISP. The doctoral education groups at the departments report to The Council for Doctoral Education (RUF) when all the department's doctoral students have a reference person.

This document has been translated from Swedish into English. If the English version differs from the original, the Swedish version takes precedence.