



National Defence University

Selections Guide 2021

Postgraduate Degrees of Military Sciences





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Postgraduate Degrees of Military Sciences

■ ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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Military Sciences

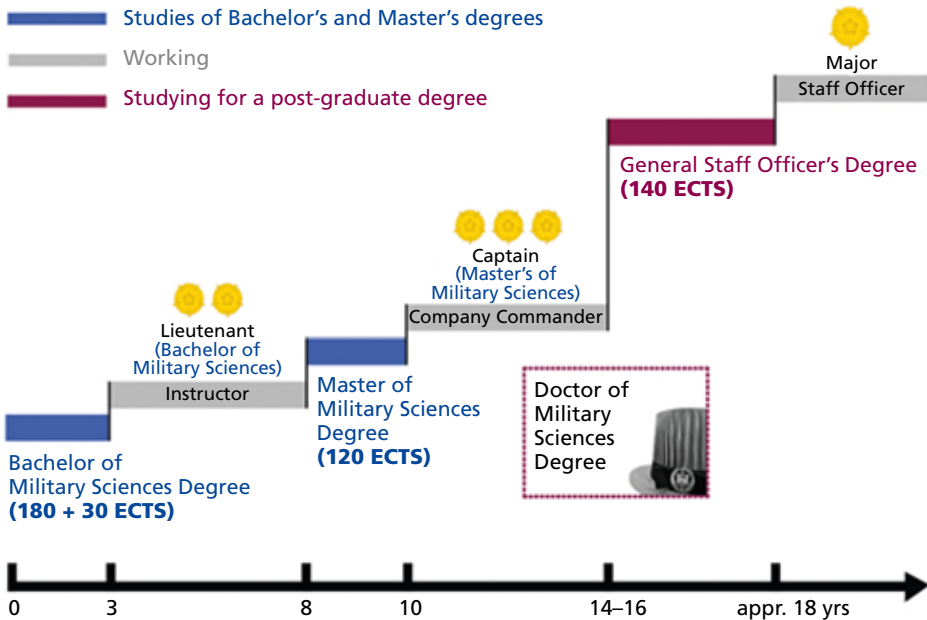
Postgraduate Degrees in the National Defence University

The National Defence University is a military tertiary education institution. According to section 2 of the Amendment (559/2016) to the Act on the National Defence University (1121/2008), the National Defence University's task is to advance research in military science, to provide teaching that is based on research and best practices, and to educate students to serve their home country and humankind. In carrying out its tasks, the National Defence University is to promote lifelong

learning, interact with the rest of society and promote the social impact of research results.

It is possible to do postgraduate studies in addition to the undergraduate and graduate degrees in the National Defence University. These studies lead to the General Staff Officer Degree (G.S) and the Doctor of Military Sciences Degree (D.Sc. (Mil.Sc.)).

■ PROGRESSING IN OFFICER STUDIES (EXAMPLE)



General Staff Officer's Degree

The General Staff Officer's degree is post-graduate degree in military sciences. The primary task is to train general staff officers for the Defence Forces and the Border Guard who have the knowledge and skills as well as prerequisites for conducting research required for senior officers' tasks in normal and emergency conditions. Those who complete the General Staff Officer Course are usually placed in senior officers' tasks in the Defence Forces and the Border Guard.

The General Staff Officer's degree comprises at least 140 ECTS. Studies take approximately two years. The focal point of studies on the General Staff Officer Course is military theory, which comprises more than half of the studies. The aim of the degree is for students to gain the knowledge and skills needed in senior officers' tasks. They also gain the prerequisites needed for conducting research at university postgraduate level.

■ ELIGIBILITY

The General Staff Officer's degree is aimed at officers who have completed their Master's degree. For special reasons, applicants who have another Master's level degree and who are otherwise found to possess the necessary knowledge and skills for these studies can be accepted to complete this degree.

■ APPLYING

The General Staff Officer Course begins every other year and the application period is approximately two years before the course begins. Separate instructions on how to apply and the application period are given for each course. Application to this course primarily takes place 4-6 years after completion of the Master of Military Sciences degree. Exceptions to this main rule can be made based on the special need of a certain branch or functional area. Such exceptions are always determined by the Defence Command. Applicants undergo an aptitude test as part of a pre-selection. Those who move on to the next selection phase are called to an entrance exam that last approximately one week. The final selections are made approximately one year before the course begins. A student may accept only one student place leading to a university degree during the same academic year.

■ COMMITMENT

Completing the General Staff Officer's Degree accrues an additional service commitment of three years.



Doctor of Military Sciences Degree

The Doctor of Military Sciences (D.Sc. (Mil.Sc.)) degree is a postgraduate degree in military sciences. The objective of this degree is conducting research and science as well as producing new researched data to develop defence capability and military sciences, and to support teaching and decision-making. A Doctorate in Military Sciences provides the student with the researcher skills required for independent research work, and military sciences knowledge and skills required for various demanding expert duties.

The extent of the scientific studies in the Doctor of Military Sciences Degree is 50 ECTS credits. The postgraduate student must write a thesis (dissertation) for their doctorate and defend it in a public thesis defence. The dissertation must be an independent scientific research project, based on the student's own research, and it must contain new sciences information and demonstrate the writer's ability for critical thought, extensive knowledge of their own field and its methods, as well as the ability to apply scientific knowledge. The degree can be completed in four years of full-time study.

■ DISCIPLINES

A doctoral degree in military sciences can be taken in the following disciplines:

- leadership
- operational art and tactics
- military history
- military pedagogy
- military sociology
- military technology
- wartime economy
- strategic studies

or within a separately determined branch of science, if justified.

■ ELIGIBILITY

Applicants who have completed a Master's or higher degree in a discipline that is relevant to military sciences may apply to complete a doctoral degree in military sciences. Additionally, the

dissertation topic must be such that it benefits military sciences research and comprehensive national defence. The National Defence University must also have the prerequisites to supervise the prospective student and dissertation.

A further requirement is that students accepted have received at least the following review of their previously completed Master's of higher level (Master's thesis, officer's degree, G.S thesis) thesis:

- minimum Cum laude approbatur (on the scale of approbatur-laudatur)
- minimum 2 (on a numerical scale of 1–3)
- minimum 3 (on a numerical scale of 1–5)

If some other scale has been used for evaluation, the review received must reach at least an equivalent level. Exceptions to this general rule can be made upon proposal by the professor of the discipline in question.

■ APPLYING

It is possible to apply to take the Doctor of Military Sciences degree at any time. Before submitting an application, applicants must consult the professor at the National Defence University, within whose discipline the planned research subject belongs. A supporting statement by the professor is required in order to be accepted for postgraduate studies. Contact information for the professors can be found from our home page at <https://maanpuolustuskorkeakoulu.fi/proffessorit>. Applicants for doctoral studies must use the form found at <https://maanpuolustuskorkeakoulu.fi/tohtoriksi>.

Together with their application form, applicants must submit:

1) A research plan, describing:

- research topic
- earlier research in the area
- research problem and preliminary research questions
- theoretical framework for the research
- research material and research methods to be used
- a short report on the planned steps and schedule of the research

2) A certificate of their earlier Master's or higher university degree,

based on which the right to conduct postgraduate studies is sought. It is not necessary to submit a certificate if the earlier degree has been completed at the National Defence University.

3) A free-form letter of application,

Stating how the research topic will benefit the National Defence University and the Finnish Defence Forces.

4) Consent to undergoing a personal security clearance

- Fill in items: B1, B2, C, D, E).
- Please note! Remember to sign the consent form! According to Section 19 of the Act on the National Defence University (1121/2008), the National Defence University requests security clearance of students applying to the National Defence University in accordance with the Act on Security Clearances (726/2014).
- Please use the pre-filled security clearance form found on our website at <https://maanpuolustuskorkeakoulu.fi/tohtoriksi>.

5) Curriculum Vitae (CV) or personal record

- Also included for security clearance.

If you want to, you can attach the following supporting documents to your application:

- letter(s) of reference
- a list of possible publications in scientific journals

Please submit your application with supporting documents to the National Defence University's Registry Office addressed to the Rector of the National Defence University:

**National Defence University
Registry Office
P.O. Box 7
00861 Helsinki**

Applicants may be asked to present original certificates. Giving false or incomplete information may lead to the loss of the right to study.

■ **SELECTION**

The decision to accept a postgraduate student is made by the Rector of the National Defence University based on the proposal of the Research Council. Foreign applicants are approved by the Defence Command Chief of Personnel upon proposal by the Rector of the National Defence University. Applicants are informed in writing as to whether their application was successful or not. A student may accept only one student place leading to a university degree during the same academic year.



Doctoral Student interview

What made you apply for the Doctoral Degree studies?

I applied for the programme at the encouragement of, and perhaps after some guidance by, Professor Emeritus Vesa Tynkkynen, who is also a retired Major General. Of course, I already had an interest in military history, stemming as far back as comprehensive school. During my Bachelor's studies, they did not even mention the possibility to complete a Doctor of Military Sciences degree, nor did it seem like a concrete option for a junior officer.

During the Master's studies and while writing my Master's thesis, my excitement and understanding of research grew, which finally led me to contemplate a possible doctorate. We also have a very supportive and enthusiastic military history research community, such as the teachers, adjunct professors and professors here at the National Defence University. It also played a part in why I decided to pursue doctoral studies. Without interesting and professional teaching of military history and research supervision I probably would not have applied for doctoral studies.

What is your background?

I started my actual military career in 2007 with the 94th Cadet Course, graduating with a Bachelor of Military Sciences in 2010. The subject of my Bachelor's thesis was military history. I branched field artillery, so as a junior officer I started work in the Artillery Brigade in Niinisaalo. From the Artillery Brigade I was assigned to Master of Military Sciences Course 5 in 2014, and I graduated from the course in 2016. The subject of my Master's thesis was military history. I started my Doctor of Military Sciences studies in 2017. My dissertation topic is based on the topic of my Master's thesis.

How are the Doctor of Military Sciences studies different from your previous studies and what new skills have you gained from your studies?

The doctoral studies are different from other military sciences studies in that they are "tailored" for the student, and often with the student, to meet the scientific requirements of the branch of science. The idea at the centre of the planning and tailoring is that all of the studies support the dissertation research, and thus produce knowledge and skills also for the students, as well as facilitate the dissertation work.

The student's independence and responsibility over their studies is emphasized, since unlike career courses, the doctoral programme studies are not done on a tightly defined schedule. These studies have developed my own skills very comprehensively, but particularly my ability for analytical and critical thinking. The research and writing have also significantly improved my ability to put my own thoughts down on paper. From a military perspective, I have to additionally highlight the development of my own tactical intellect. Knowledge and understanding of the importance of central culmination points of military history, and their role in the development national tactics help to understand the regularities of the modern character of war. Furthermore, they form a good basis for researching the character of war of the future. So, the doctoral studies further firmly support an officer's wartime tasks.

What things or moment have been the most challenging during your studies? How or with what have you conquered these challenges?

During the studies the biggest challenge by far has been time management. Combining family and working life with studies requires very detailed planning and flexibility in both areas of life. In military history research, the collec-

tion of source material requires additional time management planning because most of the source material is in different branches of the Finnish National Archives.

What tips do you have for those considering doctoral studies?

I warmly encourage people to apply for the Doctoral Studies Programme, if you have the enthusiasm and interest. Your own enthusiasm about the research topic is important. The studies provide you with an excellent opportunity and challenge for self-development. I particularly hope to see many junior officers in these studies in the future, because developing your thinking, and specifically military thought, is central for developing our defence system and Defence Forces. Being academic does not make you are poor soldier or less

versed in operational art, but rather it supports the evolution of analytical and critical thinking.

One simple tip I would give, is that finish your Master's thesis and give it the attention it deserves. That will help prove to the professor of the branch of science that you are interested in pursuing a doctorate after your Master's thesis. You should also consider the possibility of expanding your Master's thesis topic into a dissertation already when choosing that topic. This will help choose the dissertation subject. Of course, discuss the subject and your interest in pursuing a doctorate first with the department's professor who is the expert of that branch of science.

Captain Miro Palm



Additional information

**For more information on applying to study,
student selections
and starting studies you can contact:**

Opintoasiainosasto.mpkk@mil.fi

or +358 (0)299 530 214 (selections officer) and +358(0)299 530 330 (Education Coordinator)
as well as +358 (0)299 530 224 (GS and Doctorate degrees Education Coordinator)

**More information on postgraduate degrees and
applying for studies is available at maanpuolustuskorkeakoulu.fi**

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