



Faculty of Social and Life Sciences

Programme Study Plan

Master's Degree Programme in Social Science

Programme Code	SAMAS
Programme Title	Master's Degree programme in Social Science
Credits/ECTS:	120
Programme Approval	The Programme Study Plan was approved by the Faculty Board for Social and Life Sciences on 15 December 2010 and is valid from the autumn term of 2011 at Karlstad University.
Language of Instruction:	Swedish
Degree Level:	Master's (one or two years)
Degree Type:	General
Prerequisites	<p>Upper Secondary Swedish course 3 or B and English course 6 or A or equivalent. Further requirements according to chosen major:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- History: Bachelor's Degree of 180 ECTS credits with a major in history, or equivalent.- Human Geography: Bachelor's Degree of 180 ECTS credits with a major in human geography/tourism studies, or equivalent.- Social Work: General or professional Bachelor's Degree of 180 ECTS credits with a major in social care or social work, or equivalent.- Sociology: Bachelor's Degree of 180 ECTS credits with a major in sociology or social psychology, or equivalent.- Political Science: Bachelor's Degree of 180 ECTS credits with a major in political science, or equivalent.

Introduction

The Master's programme is designed for students who are aiming for a Master's degree in one of the faculty's social science disciplines:

- History
- Human Geography
- Social Work
- Sociology
- Political Science

The programme involves studies at Master's level in one of the above subjects. The programme also includes elective courses, offering opportunities for specialised or broadened knowledge in a multidisciplinary perspective. It offers in-depth subject knowledge with a broadening perspective and preparation for professional life as well as further studies. Students develop the scientific knowledge and skills required for further studies and applicable to qualified investigative work, case management, development work and project/unit management.

Studies in history emphasise the students' independent and critical approaches to selected historical problems and social science theory formation. Students put specialised theoretical and methodological skills into practice in the form of a thesis project on, for instance, studies of different societal processes at the local or regional level.

Studies in human geography focus on the human-society-environment interaction at and between various shell levels—locally, regionally and globally. Human geography offers a broad knowledge of human life and activities in a spatial perspective. Areas treated are, for example, the impact of globalisation on industry and everyday life, local and regional development, transitions and the use of landscape, cultures and identities, mobility in the form of tourism, for example, and social states and processes. Master-level students acquire in-depth knowledge of idea traditions, theories and concepts in the discipline and develop skills in analysing, assessing and independently planning, conducting and presenting a theoretically and methodologically based study in human geography.

Studies in social work centre on independent research and investigation work as well as independent analysis for the purpose of deepening knowledge of social work and social problems at the individual, group and society level, locally and globally. Students also deepen their understanding and analysis of the organisation of daily life for vulnerable groups in society with a focus on human-oriented organisations.

Studies in sociology emphasise independent research and investigation work and aim at deepening students' understanding and analysis of human relations at the individual, group, organisation and society level in a power as well as emotion sociological perspective. The importance of regional and global contexts for people's conditions and quality of life is also considered. The aim of studies in sociology at Master's level is that students acquire specialised knowledge in central sociological areas and develop further abilities to analyse and explore social conditions at different levels.

Studies in political science emphasise students' independent research and investigative and analytical skills. Students deepen their knowledge of political science concepts and its theoretical tradition and further develop ability to understand and analyse politics as process and political events, institutions and ideas. Special attention is given to political organisation and political processes at local and regional levels. The Master's level courses have a focus on the needs of local and regional actors in the perspective of international relations and public administration. Special emphasis is given to the European dimension as well as to classical and modern social science theories.

Aims and Learning Outcomes

Education at Master's level must build on the knowledge required at undergraduate level or equivalent, and entail a deepening of knowledge, skills and abilities in relation to previous studies. In addition it should

- further develop students' ability to independently integrate and apply knowledge,
- develop students' ability to handle complex phenomena, issues and situations,
- develop students' capacity for occupations requiring a high degree of independence or for research and investigative work.

(Ch. 1 §9 Higher Education Law 1993:100)

The Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100) further stipulates the general requirements for various Degree types and the local institution's right to add specific requirements.

National Objectives for the Master's Degree:

Knowledge and understanding

To earn a Master's degree, students should be able to demonstrate

- knowledge and understanding of the main field of study, including a broad command of the field and deeper knowledge of selected areas, as well as insight into current research and development, and
- deeper knowledge of theory and method in the main field of study.

Skills and abilities

To earn a Master's degree students should be able to demonstrate

- the ability to integrate knowledge and to analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, problems and situations, even when having access only to a limited amount of background information,
- the ability to work critically, independently and creatively in identifying and formulating problems, and the ability to plan and carry out advanced tasks and assignments within a given deadline, so as to contribute to the development of knowledge and to evaluate the work.
- the ability to communicate and interact with various groups in presenting and discussing information and conclusions both orally and in writing, and
- the skills required to take active part in research and development or to work in other qualified areas.

Judgement and approach

To earn a Master's degree, students should be able to demonstrate

- the ability to make appropriate judgements in the main field of study with respect to relevant scientific, societal and ethical aspects, and an awareness of ethical issues in research and development,
- insight into the possibilities and limitations of scientific research, the role of science in society, and our responsibility for its use,
- the ability to identify their own need for further knowledge and training and take responsibility for updating it.

Independent project (Degree project)

For a Degree of Master students must have completed an independent project (degree project) worth at least 30 higher education credits (ECTS) in their main field of study. The independent project may comprise less than 30 higher education credits, but not less than 15 higher education credits, if the student has already completed an independent project at the second level worth at least 15 higher education credits in their main field of study, or an equivalent project in a foreign educational programme.

Programme Structure

The programme comprises 120 ECTS credits, of which at least 60 ECTS cr are in in the main field of study. Course of at least 90 ECTS cr must be at Master's level, which means that Bachelor's level courses can be included if they are not main field of study courses and do not exceed 30 ECTS cr.

The programme structure is flexible and the pace of study may vary. In consultation with the student advisor, an individual study plan is drawn up for each student, based on their interests and availability of courses at Karlstad University or at other universities.

Programme Content

The programme comprises main field of study courses as well as elective courses, offered at Karlstad University, or at other universities.

Mandatory courses:

- Courses in the main field of study of at least 60 ECTS cr, including a degree project of at least 30 ECTS cr. The degree project can, and must if the student settles for a one-year Master's, be divided into two courses of 15 ECTS credits each, one of which is completed to meet the requirements for the one-year Master's degree.
- Course in scientific research method of at least 15 ECTS cr. The credits can be included in the main field of study or count as other courses. The methods course must be offered at the Master's level.
- Other courses of 60 ECTS credits are electives, except for the research methods course if this is not included in the main field of study. Other electives can be courses offered at Bachelor's level (no more than 30 ECTS cr).

Examination

Examination formats are specified in each syllabus.

Degree Title

Upon completion of the programme, students are awarded a Master of Science in their chosen Major.

Master of Science (120 ECTS credits). Major: History

Master of Science (120 ECTS credits). Major: Human Geography

Master of Science (120 ECTS credits). Major: Social Work

Master of Science (120 ECTS credits). Major: Sociology

Master of Science (120 ECTS credits). Major: Political Science

It is also possible to earn a Master of Science Degree of 60 ECTS credits if the following requirements for studies at Master's level are met: at least 30 ECTS cr, including a degree project of 15 ECTS cr in the Major and/or included course in research methodology of at least 7.5 ECTS cr.

Transfer of Credits

Students have the right to transfer credits from other universities in Sweden or abroad. The recognition of previous education as credit for part of a course is subject to approval by the examiner. The recognition of previous education as credit for an entire course is subject to approval by Student Centre officers.

Additional Information

Local regulations for the Bachelor's and Master's level at Karlstad University stipulate the rights and obligations of staff and students.