



Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences  
Environmental Science

# Syllabus

## Risk perception and communication

<b>Course Code:</b>	RHAD14
<b>Course Title:</b>	Risk perception and communication <i>Riskperception och riskkommunikation</i>
<b>Credits:</b>	7.5
<b>Degree Level:</b>	Master's level
<b>Progressive Specialisation:</b>	Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements (A1N)

### Major Field of Study:

FHA (Public Health Sciences)  
RHA (Risk Management)  
RIS (Societal Risk Management)

### Course Approval

The syllabus was approved by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences 2020-02-11, and is valid from the Autumn semester 2020 at Karlstad University.

### Prerequisites

First-cycle qualification of at least 180 ECTS credits, plus upper secondary school level Swedish B/3 and English A/6, or equivalent

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

- name and describe relevant concepts and theories in the field of risk perception,
- give an account of factors that are important for how individuals and groups perceive risks,
- give an account of factors that affect actual behaviour in risk situations,
- develop a plan for a risk communication approach,

- assess potential effects of different risk communication measures,
- identify and evaluate ethical issues related to risk communication.

### **Content**

The course deals with people's perceptions of and reactions to different types of risks and the effects of different forms of influence. The course is divided into two modules. The first module contains the following:

- basic theories of risk perception
- factors affecting the perception and assessment of different types of risks
- different approaches to risks between groups and individuals, for instance, in regard to gender and experience
- factors affecting people's behaviour when faced with risks and risk situations.

Students carry out an individual written assignment in the first module. The purpose of the assignment is that students develop their ability to identify and assess relevant theories in the field of risk perception and apply these as an explanatory model for given situations in daily life.

The second module deals with risk communication from a receiver's perspective. Students are assigned the task of drawing up a plan for a risk communication approach in groups and present their plan in a seminar at the concluding seminar. The plan must include consideration of ethical issues linked to risk communication.

The course is offered as web-based distance education with two brief periods on campus (Karlstad University) at the beginning and end of the course. On-campus instruction is in the form of lectures, group work, and seminars. The seminar scheduled for the second campus meeting is mandatory. We recommend that students attend the first on-campus seminar as well, but for students who are not present it is also possible to complete an individual make-up assignment to be submitted online later. In-between campus meetings, students study course literature with the support of lectures and other material via the communication platform.

### **Reading List**

See separate document.

### **Examination**

Assessment is based on an individual written hand-in assignment and a written group assignment presented orally in a mandatory seminar. The group examination includes student performance in critically reviewing and discussing the work of other groups.

If students have a decision from Karlstad University entitling them to special pedagogical support due to a documented disability, the examiner has the right to give such students an adapted examination or to examine them in a different manner.

### **Grades**

One of the grades Fail (U), Pass (G), or Distinction (VG) is awarded in the examination of the course.

### **Quality Assurance**

Follow-up relating to learning conditions and goal-fulfilment takes place both during and upon completion of the course in order to ensure continuous improvement. Course evaluation is partly based on student views and experiences obtained in accordance with current regulations and partly on other data and documentation. Students will be informed of the result of the evaluation and of any measures to be taken.

### **Course Certificate**

A course certificate will be provided upon request.

**Additional information**

The local regulations for studies at the Bachelor and Master levels at Karlstad University stipulate the obligations and rights of students and staff.

Students must have access to a computer with internet connection that meets the capacity requirements specified in Karlstad University's technical description of computer support for students.

The course RHAD14 cannot be included in the same degree programme as the course FHAD14.