PROGRAMME SYLLABUS

Finalized 04 November 2026

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Master programme in English

Masterprogram i engelska

Programme code: HAENG

Credits: 120
Education level: Second cycle
Degree type: General qualification
Language of instruction: English

Approved by

Faculty Board of Arts and Social Sciences, 04 November 2026

Effective from

Autumn semester 2027

Entry requirements

A Degree of Bachelor of at least 180 credits, including 90 credits with progressive specialisation in the main field of English. An independent project of at least 15 credits at G2E level must be included. In addition, upper secondary school English 6 or English level 2.

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General information

English is currently one of the most important languages on the global stage, with a dominating presence in both public life as well as in many people's personal lives. Consequently, studying the English language and its cultural expressions is distinctly relevant, with many potential applications in several domains, such as education, academia, politics, media and business. The Master Programme in English offers knowledge in the main field of study, with a specialisation in linguistics or literary studies. Students can also combine courses in linguistics and literary studies.

The theme of the programme is "English in contemporary life". The linguistic specialisation concerns courses that address various branches of applied linguistics, with an overall focus on perspectives and methods for studying and understanding language use as social interaction, cognition, text, and discourse. The literary courses concern cultural and literary negotiations of contemporary life, with an emphasis on historical and geographical contextualisations as well as critical perspectives.

The courses of the programme highlight contemporary language use and materials, as well as contemporary theories and methods, and are intimately tied to research specialisations at the department. The courses do not merely concern the English language and English literature in themselves, but also how linguistic and literary perspectives can shed light on societal phenomena, issues and developments.

The Master Programme in English is designed for students interested in understanding the world through language and literature, as well as understanding the role of the English language in the world. The programme aims to prepare students for research, but also provides skills in analytical and critical research and development work, which can be applied in domains where language, culture and communication are central.

Programme outcomes

National Degree of Master (60 credits) outcomes

For programme completion, students must meet the national requirements for a Degree of Master (60 or 120 credits).

Knowledge and understanding
For a Degree of Master (60 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including both broad knowledge of the field and a considerable degree of specialised knowledge in certain areas of the field as well as insight into current research and development work, and

- demonstrate deepened methodological knowledge in the main field of study.

Competence and skills
For a Degree of Master (60 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to integrate knowledge and analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations even with limited information,
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues autonomously as well as to plan and, using appropriate methods, undertake advanced tasks within predetermined time frames,
- demonstrate the ability in speech and writing to report clearly and discuss his or her conclusions and the knowledge and arguments on which they are based in dialogue with different audiences, and
- demonstrate the skills required for participation in research and development work or employment in some other qualified capacity.

Judgement and approach
For a Degree of Master (60 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the main field of study informed by relevant disciplinary, social and ethical issues and also to demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work,
- demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and
- demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for his or her ongoing learning.

Independent project
A requirement for the award of a Degree of Master (60 credits) is completion by the student of an independent project (degree project) of at least 15 credits in the main field of study.

National Degree of Master (120 credits) outcomes

Knowledge and understanding
For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including both broad knowledge of the field and a considerable degree of specialised knowledge in certain areas of the field as well as insight into current research and development work, and
- demonstrate deepened methodological knowledge in the main field of study.

Competence and skills
For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to critically and systematically integrate knowledge and analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations even with limited information,
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues critically, autonomously and creatively as well as to plan and, using appropriate methods, undertake advanced tasks within predetermined time frames and so contribute to the formation of knowledge as well as the ability to evaluate this work,
- demonstrate the ability in speech and writing both nationally and internationally to clearly report and discuss his or her conclusions and the knowledge and arguments on which they are based in dialogue with different audiences, and
- demonstrate the skills required for participation in research and development work or autonomous employment in some other qualified capacity.

Judgement and approach
For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the main field of study informed by relevant disciplinary, social and ethical issues and also to demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work,
- demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and
- demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for his or her ongoing learning.

Independent project
A requirement for the award of a Degree of Master (120 credits) is completion by the student of an independent project (degree project) of at least 30 credits in the main field of study. The degree project may comprise less than 30 credits, but no less than 15 credits, if the student has already completed an independent project in the second cycle worth at least 15 credits in the main field of study or the equivalent from a study programme outside of Sweden.

Programme structure

The programme includes courses in English linguistics and literary studies. Students therefore have considerable flexibility to combine courses in these subjects. The first semester includes a mandatory course. The rest of the study route is based on elective courses offered within the programme, as well as optional courses available at the university or other Swedish higher education institutions. Students also have the option to study abroad as part of the programme. Apart from the introductory course and the final degree project, the exact study route depends on the student’s pace of study and year of admission, as

well as individual choices. The introductory course, along with many of the elective courses, addresses issues of sustainable development and gender equality in language and literature through theoretical texts.

The programme is based on online seminars, with the possibility of supervised study activity on campus to some extent in certain courses. Instruction within the programme consists mainly of lectures, seminars and group work, which requires active student participation in the learning process. Examinations primarily consist of individual, written assignments and oral presentations, but other forms may occur, as specified in each course syllabus. The programme is available as both full-time and half-time study.

Programme curriculum

The programme structure is open, which allows for significant student customisation in terms of profile and study rate. The programme offers two possible outcomes: the student can pursue a Degree of Master (60 credits), or a Degree of Master (120 credits). Please note that for a Degree of Master (60 credits), no more than 15 credits of the total number of credits may consist of undergraduate-level courses, and for a Degree of Master (120 credits), no more than 30 credits.

Outlined below is the expected study route for full-time studies leading to a Master's degree (60 credits) or a Master's degree (120 credits). Which courses are mandatory for the first semester and which elective courses are available the following semesters depend on the student's pace of study and year of admission, since the courses follow a rotating schedule. The courses included in the programme, either as mandatory or elective, as well as those offered only as elective courses, are also listed below. Choice of courses and study planning is done in consultation with the study and career counsellor or programme coordinator.

Note that the titles and the order of the programme courses may vary.

Degree of Master (60 credits)

Semester 1
Text, culture and society: English in contemporary life, 15 credits
Elective courses, 15 credits

Semester 2
Degree project in English linguistics (Master), 15 credits, *or*
Degree project in English literature (Master), 15 credits
Elective courses, 15 credits

Degree of Master (120 credits)

Semester 1
Text, culture and society: English in contemporary life, 15 credits
Elective courses, 15 credits

Semester 2
Elective courses, 30 credits

Semester 3
Elective courses, 30 credits, *or*
Studies abroad, 30 credits

Semester 4
Degree project in English linguistics (Master), 30 credits, *or*
Degree Project in English Literature (Master), 30 credits

If an independent project for a one-year master's degree has already been completed, the student takes one of the following courses:
Degree project in English linguistics (Master), 15 credits,*or*
Degree project in English literature (Master), 15 credits

The student may choose from elective courses at Master's level in English, or subject-related courses offered at Karlstad University or another higher education institution. Elective courses included in the programme (depending on year of admission and study pace):

- African popular literature from the postcolonial novel to contemporary comics, 7.5 credits
- Negotiating the autobiographical I: American women's autobiographies 1968-2020, 7.5 credits
- Literary value and 100 years of American literature, 7.5 credits
- Dystopia and apocalypse, 7.5 credits
- Women writers' science fiction and fantasy, 7.5 credits
- Science fiction and intercultural encounters, 7.5 credits
- Theoretical perspectives on literary and cultural negotiations, 15 credits
- Second language learning: social perspectives, 7.5 credits
- Using corpora for language research, 7.5 credits
- Understanding language learning through corpus research, 7.5 credits
- Critical approaches to language and discourse, 7.5 credits
- Language and gender, 7.5 credits
- Language and social media, 7.5 credits
- Language and thought, 7.5 credits
- Talk and social interaction, 7.5 credits
- Bilingualism, 7.5 credits

Title of qualification

Degree of Master of Arts (60 credits)
Major: English

Degree of Master of Arts (120 credits)
Major: English

Credit transfer

According to the Higher Education Ordinance Ch. 6 Sec. 6-8 students have the right to transfer credits and have prior learning recognised upon approval.

Additional information

The local regulations for first and second cycle education at Karlstad University stipulate the obligations and rights of students and staff.

A previous version of the programme syllabus has been approved:
28 October 2021, Reg.no HS 2021/848, valid from the autumn semester of 2022
11 October 2022, reg.no HS 2022/1025, valid from the autumn semester of 2023
11 September 2025, reg.no HS 2025/1086, valid from autumn semester of 2026