



Faculty Board for Teacher Education

Programme Study Plan

Early Years Education Programme

Programme Code	LGFLP
Programme Title	Early Years Education Programme
Credits/ECTS:	210
Programme Approval	The Programme Study Plan was approved by the Faculty Board for Teacher Education on 14 December 2010 and is valid from the autumn term of 2011 at Karlstad University.
Language of Instruction:	Swedish
Degree Level:	Bachelor's
Degree Type:	Professional
Prerequisites	General admission requirements and field-specific eligibility 6a, or equivalent.

Introduction

Teacher education is an academic professional qualification. At Karlstad University this means that the whole programme is characterised by a clear professional perspective. The education comprises specific as well as general teaching knowledge, combining the critical perspective of research with the need for problem solution, subject knowledge and methodology in the daily school practice.

There are many routes to becoming a good teacher. The education aims to promote action-oriented problem awareness. An independent teacher identity requires good

knowledge and an open, reflective and ethical approach. Karlstad University has designed a teacher-training programme based on three competencies: *content competence*, *methodological competence* and *leadership competence*.

Content competence emphasises the knowledge aspect of learning. Teaching at all educational levels and areas requires advanced subject knowledge. The premise of *methodological competence* is the need to consider each individual's capacity and circumstance as well as the challenges involved in different subjects. Special efforts are made at Karlstad University to relate subject studies to the teaching profession. *Leadership competence* involves the skills to create comfortable and challenging learning environments. Teacher education must also prepare students for the task of evaluating school activities and their own learning as well as that of others.

Teacher education at Karlstad University has the ambition to meet and challenge school needs. This entails not only preparing students for specific school activities but also providing the tools and confidence needed to examine accustomed conceptions of learning and teaching. The Early Years Education Programme at Karlstad University is committed to providing students with many opportunities to prepare for a future profession that is complex, responsible, and changeable. Students are also prepared for further academic studies.

Aims and Learning Outcomes

The qualification of Bachelor of Arts in Early Years Education is awarded when students have completed a total of 210 ECTS credits. The following areas must be included in the degree programme: courses in the field of early years education totalling 120 ECTS credits, a core of general education studies totalling 60 ECTS credits, and practical placement totalling 30 ECTS credits in relevant workplaces.

For a Degree in Early Years Education, students must demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to work autonomously at the level of the educational system for which the qualification is awarded and for any other form of teaching that the degree qualifies for. *The Higher Education Ordinance* (SFS 2010:541). stipulates the requirements for the early years education degree.

Learning outcome requirements for a Bachelor of Arts in Early Years Education:

On completion of the degree programme, students must be able to demonstrate:

Knowledge and understanding

- the knowledge required in the field of early years education for professional practice, including current research and development work,
- the knowledge of field-specific and subject-specific learning and teaching methodology required for professional practice,
- specialised knowledge of children's communicative and linguistic development,
- specialised knowledge of basic reading, writing and mathematical skills,
- knowledge of the theory of science and of qualitative and quantitative research methods as well as of the relation between scientific basis and proven experience and its relevance to professional practice,
- knowledge of practical and aesthetic learning processes,

- knowledge and understanding of social relations, conflict management and leadership, and
- knowledge of the organisation of the school system, relevant regulatory documents, syllabus theory and different educational and teaching and learning perspectives as well as knowledge of the history of the school system.

Skills and abilities

Learning outcome requirements for a Bachelor of Arts in Early Years Education:

On completion of the degree programme, students must be able to demonstrate:

- specialised ability to meet children's need of care and create conditions in which all children can learn and develop, including play and creative activities,
- specialised ability to critically and independently consider, systematise and reflect on their own experience and that of others and on relevant research findings and thereby contribute to professional knowledge and development in the area,
- specialised ability to create conditions in which every student learn and develop
- the ability to plan, implement, evaluate and develop teaching and educational activities individually and together with others in order to stimulate the learning and development of every student in the best possible way,
- the ability to identify and in cooperation with others deal with special educational needs,
- the ability to observe, document and analyse their students' development and learning in relation to educational objectives and to inform and cooperate with students and their caregivers,
- the ability to communicate and instil core educational values, including human rights and fundamental democratic values,
- the ability to prevent and restrain discrimination and other forms of harassment of children,
- the ability to respect, communicate and instil a gender equal and equal rights perspective in educational processes,
- communicative skills in listening, speaking and writing to support educational processes,
- skills in using digital tools confidently and critically in educational processes and ability to consider the role of different media and digital environments in these processes, and
- the ability to acquire, in the educational processes, the skills that are valuable for professional practice.

Judgement and approach

On completion of the degree programme, students must be able to demonstrate:

- self-awareness and emphatic ability
- the ability to adopt a professional approach to students and their caregivers,
- the ability to make assessments of educational processes on the basis of relevant scientific, social and ethical aspects with special consideration of human rights, especially children's rights according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and sustainable development, and

- the ability to identify their need for further knowledge and to develop their skills in pedagogical practice.

Independent project (degree project)

A requirement for the award of a Bachelor of Arts in Early Years Education is that the student has completed an independent project (degree project) for at least 15 ECTS credits in the field of early education.

Programme Structure and Content

The programme comprises three parts, *general education core studies*, *practical placement* and *subject studies in the field of early education*. Also included is an independent project (degree project).

General Education Core Studies

The education core studies comprise central and general areas of teaching that are applied and related to the future profession. These areas are integrated and alternate with subject-based studies and with practical placement periods throughout the programme to form the basis of the professional identity. The general education core studies (totalling 60 ECTS cr) cover the following areas:

- history of the school system, its organisation and conditions as well as core educational values, including fundamental democratic principles and human rights
- syllabus theory and subject-specific teaching and learning
- theory of science and research methodology
- development, learning and special needs education
- social relationships, conflict management and leadership
- assessing and analysing learning and development, and
- evaluation and development processes.

The education core studies at Karlstad University are organised in two thematic areas: *The teaching profession* and *pedagogical leadership*. These areas alternate with subject studies and practical placement periods.

Subject studies in the field of early years education

A characteristic feature of day care and pre-school is that care, education, learning and play form a whole. The profession demands qualifications in several areas. The field of early years education integrates knowledge of children's development and learning processes with knowledge of subjects, methods and the purpose and organizational control of preschool education.

The field of early education also aims at developing the students' scientific approach to and critical reflection on the child's learning and development in relation to content and

forms of interaction between children, children and educator, and between educator and caregiver. Children's rights, core values and sustainable development are other areas addressed and discussed. The theme- and play-oriented educational method is reflected in programme courses, in which subject content is integrated with practical and aesthetic forms.

Practical Placement

Practical placement is a crucial part of the early years education. In this part of the training, students examine and transform acquired knowledge into teaching practice. Experiences gained are then included and discussed in the subject studies. The purpose of the school placement is that teacher trainees should gain an understanding of the multifaceted nature and complexity of the teaching profession and develop their teaching skills. The trainees participate in different pedagogical activities such as planning, teaching and follow-up. They are also expected to be involved in parent interaction, in development conversation, in interpreting and realizing guidelines, and in local development projects.

Teacher training at Karlstad University collaborates with a great number of municipalities in the region and beyond. Practical placement is organised in partner districts. The trainee is placed in the same partner district throughout the education to guarantee continuity and progression in the student's development towards a teacher identity.

Design and Content outline

The first term of the programme centres on preschool, in terms of its emergence, organisational control, and the changing perception of children and childhood over time. The first term also includes a five-week placement period.

In the second term, there is a focus on children's learning and development process with theory manifested in movement and play. This is followed by a year of subject studies in which content is related to aspects of children's linguistic, social and cognitive development, e.g. combining mathematics, natural science and technology with practical/aesthetic forms of expression. Placement periods are also included.

Term five involves the leadership of the preschool educator, cooperation with caregivers and the evaluation and development of activities. Term six covers scientific method, practical training and a degree project. Term seven has a special focus on children's reading, writing and mathematical skills.

Below is a survey of the programme:

<p>Term 1 Theme: Children and Childhood</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •General Education Studies: The Teaching Profession, 15 ECTS cr •Practical Placement, 7.5 ECTS cr •Subject studies, 7.5 ECTS cr
<p>Term 2 Theme: Learning and Developing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •General Education Studies: The Teaching Profession, 15 ECTS cr •Subject studies, 15 ECTS cr
<p>Term 3 Theme: Subject Studies and Aesthetics (Swedish, mathematics, music, dance)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Mathematics, 30 ECTS cr
<p>Term 4 Theme: Subject Studies and Aesthetics (natural science, technology, art, drama)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Subject studies, 22.5 ECTS cr •Practical Placement, 7.5 ECTS cr
<p>Term 5 Theme: Leading and Developing Preschool</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Practical Placement 7.5 ECTS cr •General Education studies, 22.5 ECTS cr
<p>Term 6 Theme: Preschool and the Science Perspective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Practical Placement, 7.5 ECTS cr •General Education Studies, 7.5 ECTS cr •Degree Project, 15 ECTS cr
<p>Term 7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •General Education Studies: Pedagogical Leadership continued, 15 ECTS cr •Degree Project,, 15 ECTS cr
<p>Term 8 Theme: Children's reading, writing and mathematical skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Subject studies, 30 ECTS cr.

Survey of courses, higher education credits and progressive specialisation are specified in attachment.

Degree Project

The aim of the independent degree project is that students acquire basic knowledge of research and development work. The project must be relevant to the future professional practice. Students formulate a research question related to theory and previous research, and carry out an investigation. The result is presented in writing and discussed at a seminar.

Study Abroad

Students are encouraged to study abroad towards the end of their programme, for instance, in connection with the practical placement module or the degree project. More information on opportunities is available at

<http://www.kau.se/lararutbildningen/samverkan/internationalisering>.

It is important to make plans for studying abroad well in advance.

Instruction and Examination Formats

Instruction and examination formats vary. Examples of instruction formats are seminars, lectures, group and laboratory work. Examples of examination formats are written exams, take-home exams, oral presentations, aesthetic performance. Mandatory components are specified in course syllabuses.

Degree Title

Bachelor of Arts in Early Years Education

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 and Master levels at Karlstad University stipulate the rights and obligations of staff and students.

The Swedish Riksdag has decided (SFS 2008:53) that, effective from 1 April 2008), teacher trainees and students in municipal adult education who are required to complete practical placement modules must be subjected to background checks. The vetting procedure is carried out to safeguard the welfare of children and young adults and minimize the risk of their being abused by personnel in preschool, school and after-school care.

All students are responsible for submitting a valid, and recent extract of record (Request to the Swedish Police for an extract from the criminal record, RPS 442.5 05-10) to the school principal (or equivalent) when they are assigned a placement. The request should be made to the Police well in advance of the start of the placement period since the processing normally takes two weeks.

Failure to present the criminal record extract can mean that the student is denied admittance to their placement, which in turn can result in a failure to meet degree requirements. It is the principal (or equivalent) in the partner district who decides whether or not to admit students, not the university.