



Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Programme Syllabus

Reg. no. HS 2024/127

Master Programme in History

Programme code:	SAHIS
Programme title:	Master Programme in History <i>Masterprogram i historia</i>
Credits:	120
Programme approval:	The programme syllabus was approved by the Faculty Board of Arts and Social Sciences on 6 February 2025, effective from the autumn semester of 2025.
Language of instruction:	Swedish and English
Education cycle:	Second (Master's)
Degree type:	General Degree of Master (120 credits) with the possibility of a Degree of Master (60 credits)
Entry requirements	A Degree of Bachelor of at least 180 credits with History, History of Ideas, Cultural Studies, Religious Studies, Political Science, Ethnology or Archaeology as the main field of study. An independent project of at least 15 credits at G2E level must be included. Upper secondary school level Swedish 3 and English 6/A. Equivalence assessment may be made.

General information

History studies centre on the human being and societies through the centuries. Empirical analysis and source critical awareness are core elements of studying continuity and change at local, regional and global levels. The Master Programme in History at Karlstad University has a cultural history profile in which the perspectives on cultural heritage and the use of history interact with how history affects collective horizons of expectation and our understanding of the contemporary world. Students learn to navigate in an international and ever-changing multidisciplinary area of knowledge, in which individual and collective forms of action and conceptions provide further perspectives on identity and interculturality. The Master Programme in History allows students to acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities required to conduct advanced historical analyses of societal issues and complex societal challenges. The

programme emphasises critical analysis and judgement, and concludes with an independent project where the students plan and conduct a historical study using well-established theories and methodology.

Our understanding of historical societal development rests largely on how different types of power structures have challenged and sustained inequality. Among long-term sustainability aspects, social sustainability is often the most explicit. The cultural heritage sector is strongly connected to different types of identity processes, usually from an inclusive or exclusive perspective based on class, gender and ethnicity. Consequently, issues on what cultural issues are and whose cultural heritage is important can be controversial. Partly because they indicate the inclusion or exclusion of people on different grounds, as well as because cultural heritage issues take a more prominent position in parliamentary cultural policy debates. Perspectives on the use of history and how it is manifested in different contexts, and how this affects history awareness on both an individual and collective level, are therefore important dimensions of the study programme. The digital format, the digitisation of different kinds of source material, as well as the increasing significance of the new media landscape, are also examples of changing and important dimension. This also includes growing societal challenges that need to be identified and addressed. Conquering specialised knowledge of cultural history provides important tools to approach these types of issues and challenges.

Students are offered practical placements, project work and mentorship opportunities to prepare them for their future careers. In-depth knowledge of history and the ability to manage, analyse and give priority to essential information in large datasets enable students to pursue a broad range of different careers. Examples include work in sectors such as education, media, library and archives, politics, and public management at municipal, regional and national levels, as well as the traditional sectors for historians that do not work as teachers, namely the culture and cultural heritage sector (e.g., museums, exhibitions, information and communication). The programme provides a solid foundation for students to work with advanced development, investigative or management work, as well as creative writing or running innovative cultural projects. The Master Programme in History also prepares the students for doctoral studies.

Programme outcomes

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

National outcomes for a Degree of Master (60 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 an overview of the field and specialised knowledge in certain areas of the field as well as insight into current research and development work, and
- demonstrate specialised 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 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 outcomes for a Degree of Master (120 credits)

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 specialised 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 to clearly present and discuss their conclusions in speech and writing in dialogue with different audiences in both national and international contexts, 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 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 is designed to encourage students to actively participate in the learning process through, for example, certain interest-oriented exam assignments. Learning activities are characterised by an open atmosphere that welcomes discussion and the free pursuit of knowledge. The recommended study path is based on progressive courses in the field of history and concludes with an independent project. The first semester introduces and reinforces knowledge of the development and perspectives of the discipline of history in terms of areas such as nation, gender, class and use of history, which are studied through the theoretical, historiographical and methodological perspectives of the discipline. Students then deepen their knowledge of cultural historical methods and archives, followed by further specialisation in cultural heritage and political history. A number of optional courses offer students the opportunity to deepen and broaden their knowledge in relation to the specialisation of the programme. Students also have the opportunity to either complete a practical placement or take courses that prepare for a more research-oriented future career. Here, students have the opportunity to study at other higher education institutions in Sweden or abroad. The programme concludes with an independent project, which is presented at the history research seminar. The choice of thesis topic is made in consultation with the course coordinator, where potential opportunities and limitations are discussed.

The programme is conducted via distance education, with one mandatory 2-day on-campus meeting per semester. Students need to plan to come to Karlstad for two days in November and in May each year of the programme. To participate in the programme, students need access to a computer and internet connection.

Programme curriculum

Students can study at full- or part-time and the programme offers two possible outcomes; either a Degree of Master (60 credits) or a Degree of Master (120 credits). Please note that no more than 30 credits of the programme's total amount of credits can consist of bachelor-level courses.

The study route of the programme is outlined below (based on full-time studies). Note that the programme courses can have other titles and be offered in a different order than listed here. Please refer to the programme webpage. All courses are provided by the history discipline, unless otherwise stated.

Degree of Master (60 credits)

Semester 1

Introduction to historical studies 7.5 credits

Use of history 7.5 credits

Historical methods, 7.5 credits

Historiography, 7.5 credits

Semester 2

Archives and cultural heritage, 7.5 credits

Cultural heritage, 7.5 credits

Independent project in history I, 15 credits

Degree of Master (120 credits)

Semester 1

Introduction to historical studies 7.5 credits

Use of history 7.5 credits

Historical methods, 7.5 credits

Historiography, 7.5 credits

Semester 2

Archives and cultural heritage, 7.5 credits

The new political history, 7.5 credits

Cultural heritage, 7.5 credits
Research methods in cultural history, 7.5 credits

Semester 3

Optional courses totalling 30 credits

Semester 4

Master's thesis in history, 30 credits.

This can be replaced by the course Independent project in history II, 15 credits, and 15 credits worth of optional courses, if the student already has a Degree of Master (60 credits).

Degree title

Degree of Master of Arts (60 credits)

Main field of study: History

Degree of Master of Arts (120 credits)

Main field of study: History

Credit transfer

According to the Higher Education Ordinance, Chap. 6, Sect. 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.

Previous versions of the programme syllabus have been approved:

7 February 2019, reg. no HS 2019/46, effective from the autumn semester 2019

3 February 2022, reg.no HS 2022/23, effective from the autumn semester of 2022