



Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Programme Study Plan

Public Relations

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| Programme Code: | SGKPR |
| Programme Title: | Study Programme in Public Relations |
| ECTS credits: | 180 |
| Programme Approval: | The programme study plan was approved by the Faculty Board of Arts and Social Sciences on 27 October 2016 and is effective from the autumn term of 2017. |
| Language of Instruction: | Swedish and English |
| Degree Level | Bachelor's |
| Degree Type | General |
| Prerequisites | General admission requirements and Civics 1b or 1a1 + 1a2. Upper secondary English course 6. |

General Information

This programme is intended to provide basic knowledge and skills in public relations work, and to promote independent and critical thinking in and about that field. It is thus intended to develop the students' ability to analyse, plan, structure, disseminate, and evaluate information and communication within/for organisations. The main field of study is media and communication studies with a special emphasis on strategic communication. The study programme is mainly theoretical, but also offers application opportunities as well as further specialisation with a view to future professional work in the field of communication through an elective term.

Programme Aims

The learning outcomes for the study programme comprise the national outcomes that have to be fulfilled to be awarded a Bachelor's degree, and the local programme outcomes.

National outcomes*Knowledge and understanding*

For a Bachelor's degree, students shall:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including knowledge of the disciplinary foundation of the field, knowledge of applicable methodologies in the field, specialised study in some aspect of the field as well as awareness of current research issues.

Competence and skills

For a Bachelor's degree, students shall:

- demonstrate the ability to search for, gather, evaluate and critically interpret the relevant information for a formulated problem and also discuss phenomena, issues and situations critically,
- demonstrate the ability to identify, formulate and solve problems independently and to complete tasks within predetermined time frames,
- demonstrate the ability to present and discuss information, problems and solutions in speech and writing and in dialogue with different audiences, and
- demonstrate the skills required to work independently in the main field of study.

Judgement and approach

For a Bachelor's degree, students shall:

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the main field of study informed by relevant disciplinary, social and ethical issues,
- demonstrate insight into the role of knowledge 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 ongoing development.

Local outcomes*Knowledge and understanding*

Upon completion of the programme students shall be able to:

- demonstrate basic and in-depth knowledge of communications planning and strategic communication,
- give an account of and draw conclusions about the role of media in society,
- give an account of the role of communication for individuals, groups, organisations and industry,
- demonstrate understanding of project management methodology,
- demonstrate knowledge of the ethical aspects of information and communication activities, and
- demonstrate understanding of basic political and cultural contexts from a communication perspective.

Competence and skills

Upon completion of the programme students shall be able to:

- demonstrate ability to give an account of, analyse, plan, carry out and evaluate communication efforts,
- demonstrate ability to carry out an independent project in the field, and

- demonstrate ability to adopt a critical approach to media and its role in society.

Judgement and approach

Upon completion of the programme students shall be able to:

- demonstrate understanding of the role of knowledge in society as well as ability to identify their own need for further knowledge, and
- reflect on the theoretical basis of the study programme and its application to a professional situation.

Programme Structure

The study programme comprises 180 ECTS credits over 6 terms. In the sixth term (30 ECTS cr.) students can study any course/s of their choice. Upon completion of the programme, students should have at least 90 ECTS cr. in the major subject media and communication studies. The study programme includes six separate but relatively unified term courses.

Programme Curriculum

| Term | Public Relations |
|-------------|---|
| 1 | Introduction to Media and Communication Studies (15 ECTS cr) Text, Communication and Organisation (15 ECTS cr) |
| 2 | Public Relations Work in Theory and Practice (30 ECTS cr) |
| 3 | Strategic Communication (30 ECTS cr) |
| 4 | Research Method and Thesis Writing (15 ECTS cr) Project Management and Production (15 ECTS cr) |
| 5 | Media and Communication Studies III (30 ECTS cr) |
| 6 | Elective term (30 ECTS cr) |

Term 1

The basics of communication theory are introduced. The term includes two courses, Introduction to Media and Communication Studies (15 ECTS cr) and Text, Communication and Organisation, (15 ECTS cr). In the first course traditional problem areas in the field are introduced, along with basic theoretical and methodological perspectives on the role of media in society. Media developments of recent decades are also situated in a longer historical context. The second course covers components dealing with basic perspectives on media texts and methods for analysing content, as well as the basics of communication within and between organisations. As a whole the term provides a broad perspective on the social, economic, political, legal and cultural aspects of media conditions and roles.

Term 2

In the course Public Relations Work in Theory and Practice (30 ECTS cr) students are given theoretical and practical tools for working as communications officers (with an emphasis on oral and written presentation) and for adopting a professional approach to the role of the communication officer. The course deals with basic linguistic concepts and verbal communication as a social and societal phenomenon. Different types of written production are treated for the purpose of improving students' ability to use readable, nuanced, and functional language. Students also practise oral presentations, especially the ability to present material clearly and lucidly and to argue with and without support in writing.

Term 3

In the course Strategic Communication (30 ECTS cr) students are given basic and deepened knowledge of strategic communication and communications planning. Students learn to carry out theoretically grounded and practically useful analyses of an organisation's internal and external communication. The course presents a broad spectrum of different aspects of strategic communication: brand names, brand name building, internal communication, opinion formation, and crisis management. The role of the communication officer in an organisation is also treated.

Term 4

The term comprises two courses, Research Method and Thesis Writing (15 ECTS cr) and Project Management and Production (15 ECTS cr). In the first course, students deepen their knowledge in media and communication studies by studying research methods and carrying out an independent research project in the field. In the other course students have to acquire practical knowledge in project work (the dominant mode of approach in the PR sector today), project management and project management methodology. Students also have to specialise in their own chosen project, producing information material from idea to graphical design in published form. An important element in the course is discussion of the choice of communication channel for publications and how this affects the work.

Term 5

The course Media and Communication Studies III (30 ECTS cr) begins with further studies of communication theory, followed by further training in research methodology and the theory of science. The module is concluded with a degree project (15 ECTS), where students practise carrying out a comprehensive scientific project independently.

Term 6

The last term consists of elective course/s. This term offers good opportunities to study abroad. There is a well-developed cooperation with different universities around the world and a broad choice of courses. There are also many courses at Karlstad University and at other universities and university colleges in Sweden to choose from. Media and Communication Studies offers courses in, e.g., journalistic writing, media placements, the web and digital images.

Degree Awarded

Degree of Bachelor of Arts

Major: Media and Communication Studies

Transfer of Credits

As per Ch. 6 §§ 6–8 of the Higher Education Ordinance students have the right to transfer credits from previously completed university courses, subject to approval.

Additional Information

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