



Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Programme Study Plan

Reg.no: HS 2021/775

Human Resource Management and Working Life

Programme code:	SGPAR
Programme title:	Human Resource Management and Working Life Personal och arbetsliv
ECTS credits:	180
Programme approval:	The Programme Study Plan was approved by the Faculty Board of Arts and Social Sciences on 9 September 2021 and is valid from the autumn semester of 2022.
Language of instruction:	Swedish, but English may be used for some elements
Degree level:	Bachelor
Degree type:	General
Prerequisites:	General admission requirements and Mathematics 2a or 2b or 2c and Civics 1b or 1a1 + 1a2.

General information

The field of knowledge focused on in this study programme is the relation between individuals, organisations and working life, and the effects of their interaction. The programme is designed for students who plan to work with human resource management as well as for students who are interested in related areas such as qualified investigative, evaluative and analytical work in areas such as sustainable work environments, equality and diversity, education, professional development and organisational change.

Aims

The aim of the study programme is to provide the opportunity for students to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for independent work in the strategic area of human resource management in a wide sense. To be awarded a Bachelor's degree the student must meet national degree requirements as well as the local programme requirements.

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 timeframes,
- 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

For a Bachelor's degree in Working Life Science, students shall

- explain and problematise the organisation, management and conditions of work in terms of different theoretical perspectives and paying particular attention to issues of equality, and analyse and discuss their impact on individual, group, organisation and societal levels,
- relate relevant research and theories in the area to concrete practices and phenomena in occupations and the workplace, and
- evaluate and adopt a critical approach to assumptions, methods and research in the field of human resources, work and employment.

Programme structure

The Human Resource Management and Working Life programme comprises six semesters and includes a combination of theoretical and practical components. The programme alternates between theoretical lectures, seminars and guest lectures by practitioners in the field. The programme is characterised by the prominence of group work on concrete case studies, conducted in partnership with practitioners as well as exercises taking the form of role-play or other relevant formats. Ability to work in teams is honed throughout the programme, as many courses include examinations requiring this type of cooperation between students.

The first two semesters of the programme are taken in the field of Working Life Science. Students acquire foundational knowledge in the research field of working life and the subject Working Life Science, including topics such as the labour market, different types of employment, organisations, leadership, human resource management, work environment and equality.

The third semester comprises courses in Law. Students are offered the opportunity to acquire knowledge of labour legislation, with focus on human resources and work environment issues. Semester 4 commences with a course in Business Administration that includes topics such as accounting, budgeting, corporate governance models and human resources finances. Towards the end of Semester 4, students embark on a four-week practical placement before acquiring more specialised knowledge of regulations, theories and methods for creating a sustainable and health-promoting work environment.

The fourth semester commences with a course in Business Administration that includes topics such as accounting, budgeting, corporate governance models and personnel economics, as well as corporate social responsibility. In the latter part of the fourth semester, students have the opportunity to choose between various elective courses. Students can choose between different combinations of a five-week practical placement, a ten-week practical placement, writing an essay or acquiring more in-depth knowledge of regulations, theories and methods for creating a sustainable and health-promoting work environment.

The fifth semester comprises elective studies in one/more of the subjects Gender Studies, Sociology/Social Psychology, or a semester comprising Psychology and Project Management. Students may also choose to study abroad during this semester, or to take courses in another subject relevant to the programme – but places are not guaranteed on such courses. The sixth and final semester again comprises studies in the major Working Life Science, including more specialised theoretical study of the areas of human resources, organisations and working life, with specific focus on analysis and critical reflection. This also includes knowledge development in research methodology and completion of an independent project in the form of a bachelor thesis. Another central aspect of the final semester is that students are given the opportunity to critically evaluate and discuss current Working Life Science research in a transdisciplinary manner, drawing on their knowledge of Working Life Science and with different approaches from other subjects.

Examinations are assessed individually and examination formats include written and spoken presentations, such as written examinations, take-home examinations, group presentations, individual written assignments, exercises such as case studies and qualitative and quantitative data analysis as well as independent research projects. The programme is structured to ensure gradual progression in course content and examinations. Graduates meet the entry requirements for master-level studies.

Programme content

Please note that courses included in the programme may have different titles and be offered in a different order than listed below.

Semester 1

Working Life Science, Introductory Course (7.5 ECTS cr.)

The course treats modern working life and its organisation and impact on different categories of people in society. In addition, students are introduced to knowledge and learning in academia and other work contexts, as well as to basic theory of science. The emphasis is on presenting and discussing central and basic concepts in the fields of working life and theory of science.

People at Work and Modes of Labour (7.5 ECTS cr.)

The course treats modes of labour, the relation between these modes and different categories of people based on, for example, gender, ethnicity, age and education, as well as the consequences of these relations and segregation issues. The course includes both concrete descriptions and theoretical models, provided through an orientation in relevant statistics and literature in the area.

Working Life Science Methods (7.5 ECTS cr.)

The course treats formulating research problems, the components of the research process, collecting and processing of quantitative and qualitative data, different data collection techniques with focus on surveys and interviews, reporting results, planning research projects, and finding and critically evaluating academic articles. The aim of the course is that students acquire basic knowledge and skills in investigative and research methodology relevant to Working Life Science issues.

Organisation and Leadership (7.5 ECTS cr.)

The course treats the development of general organisation theory and includes orientation in more modern theories, approaches and analysis models. The course further includes the basic

issues and concepts related to organisational structure, organisational design, management and organisational change.

Semester 2

Organisation, Power and Resistance (7.5 ECTS cr.)

The course focuses on different organisation theory phenomena, such as leadership, power and resistance, work conditions and attitudes to work. The aim of the course is for students to acquire more in-depth knowledge on the organisation of work, and its causes and effects. Further, students adopt a critical approach to reviewing different organisational phenomena, such as leadership, power and resistance, work conditions and attitudes to work.

Strategic Human Resource Management (7.5 ECTS cr.)

Students are introduced to methods for approaching human resourcing issues strategically. Central concepts include workplace mission, human resources mission and skills supply. The course also includes applied exercises. The aim of the course is that students acquire knowledge of and can explain the relation between human resource management and the content, organisation, staffing and changes in the of field of work.

Operative Human Resource Management (7.5 ECTS cr.)

The course treats the ideas, areas and procedures of human resource management. Aspects discussed include recruitment, professional development, equality and diversity in organisations, rehabilitation, discrimination, alcohol and drugs, violence and threats of violence and preventative and sustainable human resource management. The aim of the course is that students acquire knowledge of the ideas of human resource management and skills in its application and work procedures.

Labour Market and Working Life in a Comparative European Perspective (7.5 ECTS cr.)

The course treats modern working life, taking a comparative, European approach to basic issues related to the interaction between humans, technology, society and culture. Course content is related to ongoing research, thereby giving students the opportunity to gain knowledge on current research questions.

Semester 3

Labour Law (15 ECTS cr.)

The course treats individual and collective labour law. Students acquire knowledge of the regulations that apply to employment procedures, during ongoing employment and at the termination of employment, as well as on collective labour law and its effects. The aim of the course is that students acquire knowledge of the function of labour law in the workplace, learn to apply legal methods to assess and solve labour law related issues, and learn about the impact of EU law on Swedish labour legislation.

Work Environment Law (15 ECTS cr.)

The course treats work environment legislation, with specific focus on the Work Environment Act and associated legislation and prescriptions. The emphasis is on issues related to the organisational and social work environment, systematic work environment efforts and the vocational rehabilitation system. During the final five weeks, students write reports in groups of 3–4.

Semester 4

Financial Control Systems (15 ECTS cr.)

The aim of the course is for students to acquire foundational knowledge of business administration in the area of control systems. The course treats business administration concepts and traditional business administration areas such as accounting and budgeting. Different models of financial control as well as personnel economics and corporate social responsibility are also included.

*Elective course**Practical Placement I: Working Life Science (7.5 ECTS cr.)*

The aim of the course is for students to reflect on and explain the connection between theory and practice, as well as apply knowledge of Working Life Science to the fields of human resource management and working life. The course mainly consists of the students embarking on a practical placement with work duties related to the field of study. Students are required to arrange their own placements.

*Elective course**Practical Placement II: Working Life Science (15 ECTS cr.)*

The aim of the course is for students to reflect on and explain the connection between theory and practice, as well as apply knowledge of Working Life Science to the fields of human resource management and working life. The course mainly consists of the students embarking on a practical placement with work duties related to the field of study. With guidance from supervisors at the work place, students shall participate in the daily work and, wherever possible, perform qualified tasks and investigative assignments that provide opportunities for the student to develop the knowledge gained within the framework of the study programme. Students are required to arrange their own placements.

*Elective course**Elementary Research Project in Working Life Science (7.5 ECTS cr.)*

The aim of the course is for the student to plan, perform and report in writing a limited academic study. In this course, the students, individually or in groups of two, conduct a study and write up the results in the form of a scholarly degree project. The students base an actual empirical study on an issue in Working Life Science and report the study in accordance with the conventions for scholarly reports or essays. The course concludes with an open seminar at which students defend their report and act as peer reviewer of another student's report.

*Elective course**Inclusive and Sustainable Work Environments (7.5 ECTS cr.)*

The aim of the course is that students acquire foundational knowledge of risk and wellbeing factors and how sustainable work environments can be created for everyone, including persons with special needs. The course treats methods and theories for analysing work environments at organisational and workplace levels. Further, methods for presenting and highlighting the benefits of a good work environment are treated, as well as ways of advocating work environment measures in an organisation.

Semester 5

During this semester, students take foundational courses¹ in one or more of the subjects Psychology, Sociology/Social Psychology or Gender Studies, with guaranteed places in one of these subjects. The guarantee is limited; students are not guaranteed places in their first choice, but are guaranteed places on one of the electable subjects listed below:

Psychological Approaches to Organisation and Project Management (30 ECTS cr.)

This course is offered by the subjects Psychology and Project Management and treats group and organisational psychology, as well as theoretical foundations and techniques for general project management methods focused on projects promoting internal change. The course is characterised by group work with practice-based cases, and the group itself is also the object of observation and reflection.

Sociology 1 (30 ECTS cr.)

This course offers students tools for developing an understanding of society and its development as well as of their own identities as members of society and of possibilities for social change. Sociological approaches are studied in more detail in specific limited problem areas as well as

¹ At G1N level, i.e. foundational bachelor courses, with only have upper-secondary school prerequisites.

through a foundational introduction to the different phases of the research process, as well as theory of science and research methods.

Social Psychology 1 (30 ECTS cr.)

This course offers students tools for understanding the human as a group and social being through an orientation on foundational concepts and theories in Social Psychology, focused on socialisation, interaction, and daily and working life. The course further treats theory on how people create expectations in interaction with others and give students a basic overview of the theory of science, different stages of the research process and methodological problems encountered when carrying out social psychological studies.

Gender Studies 1 (30 ECTS cr.)

This course introduces students to foundational concepts and theories in the areas of feminism and gender studies, with emphasis on power relations between the genders. Interaction and intersections between sex/gender and other aspects of power relations such as class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age and religion are introduced and treated. A feminist approach is taken to outlining theory of science.

Students can also freely choose the courses they take this semester, without being guaranteed places.

International exchange

During semester 5 students have good opportunities for studying abroad.

Semester 6

Working Life Science: Traditions and Theories (7.5 ECTS cr.)

This course treats the disciplinary traditions and theories of Working Life Science. Students are introduced to current national and international research and practise doing searching for relevant research results in national and international databases. The course content is connected to the traditions and issues of or example occupational psychology, occupational pedagogics and workplace finances and technology. The aim of the course is that students acquire more in-depth knowledge of central disciplinary traditions and theories of Working Life Science.

Working Life Science Methods: Data Processing and Analysis (7.5 ECTS cr.)

The course treats studies making use of established empirical methods taking both quantitative and qualitative approaches, and also includes exercises in using some of these methods. Special weight is given to statistical processing and analysis of quantitative data as well as to processing and analysing qualitative data using existing theories and generating theories on the basis of empirical evidence. The aim of the course is that students acquire knowledge of a number of methods, learn when, how and why they are used and familiarise themselves with the advantages and disadvantages of these different methods.

Working Life Science: Degree project (15 ECTS cr.)

In this course, students conduct an independent study and write up the results in the form of a scholarly degree project. Students base an actual empirical study on an issue in Working Life Science and report the study according to the conventions for scholarly reports or essays. The course concludes with an open seminar at which each student defends their own report and also act as opponent on the report written by another student. The aim of the course is that students write a scholarly report which demonstrates their ability to identify and analyse an issue in Working Life Science.

Degree title

Degree of Bachelor of Social Science
Major: Working Life Science

Filosofie kandidatexamen
Huvudområde: Arbetsvetenskap

Transfer of credits

According to Ch. 6 Sec. 6–8 of the Higher Education Ordinance, students have the right to transfer credits from other universities upon approval.

Additional information

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

Earlier versions of this programme study plan was approved on:

14 Dec. 2006, reg. no FAK1 2006/190, valid from the autumn semester of 2007

8 Jun. 2010, reg. no FAK1 2010/99, valid from the autumn semester of 2010

8 Sep. 2011, reg. no FAK1 2011/148, valid from the autumn semester of 2011

3 Feb. 2016, reg. no HS 2016/84, valid from the autumn semester of 2016

16 Jun. 2016, reg. no HS 2016/84, valid from the autumn semester of 2017

7 February 2019, reg.no. HS 2019/40, valid from the autumn semester of 2019