



FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Visual Communication and Design

Visuell kommunikation och design

Programme code: SGVKD

ECTS Credits: 180

Education level: First cycle

Degree type: General qualification

Language of instruction: Swedish and English

Finalized by

Faculty Board of Arts and Social Sciences, 2025-12-11

Valid from

Autumn semester 2026

Entry requirements

General entry requirements plus either

upper secondary level Civics 1b or 1a1+1a2, English 6

or

upper secondary level Civics level 1b or level 1a1+1a2, English level 2.

Introduction

The study programme provides a broad foundation in media and communication studies, with a particular focus on *visual communication and design*. Digitalisation, new technology, software and AI tools are continuously integrated into the courses of the programme. After completing the programme, students can choose to continue their studies at master's level or begin their professional career.

The broad scope of the programme enables students to discover and develop their specific areas of interest. Upon graduation, it opens up a wide range of professional roles in various sectors within design and communication, such as design agencies, communication agencies, web agencies, media agencies, inhouse agencies and communication offices. Graduates may also work with various forms of media production, such as print, digital media, social media, as well as film and moving image.

Programme outcomes

For programme completion, students must meet the national requirements for a Degree of Bachelor as well as the specific local programme outcomes.

National outcomes

Knowledge and understanding

For a Degree of Bachelor the student 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 Degree of Bachelor the student 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 autonomously 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 autonomously in the main field of study.

Judgement and approach

For a Degree of Bachelor the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments informed by relevant disciplinary, social and ethical aspects
- 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 undertake ongoing development of his or her skills.

Independent project (degree project)

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

Local outcomes

Knowledge and understanding

Upon completion of the study programme, the student shall be able to

- describe the economic, historical, legal, political, social and technological conditions of the media
- explain and analyse the relationship between the media and the wider community, and
- demonstrate advanced knowledge and perspectives on communication planning and its implementation.

Competence and skills

Upon completion of the study programme, the student shall be able to

- initiate, plan, design, realise, analyse and evaluate visual communication in various contexts
- express various forms of communication visually, and
- initiate, plan, structure and lead project work through a design process.

Judgement and approach

Upon completion of the study programme, the student shall be able to

- demonstrate a creative and analytical approach to communication with, and design of, visual media.

Programme structure

The programme comprises 180 credits, out of which 30 credits in the fifth semester consist of free elective courses where students can choose courses based on their own interests. Upon completion of the programme, students should have at least 90 credits in the main field of study, media and communication studies.

The first semester of the programme consists of two courses in which students acquire the fundamental knowledge and skills needed to understand the discipline of media and communication studies and its development. In the second semester, students are introduced to visual communication and design. In the third semester, students deepen their

knowledge of visual communication and design. The fourth semester includes two courses on method and a smaller research project, which serves as an introduction to scientific method and how to conduct scientific investigations. In the fifth semester, students may choose to deepen their studies in media and communication, undertake a practical placement or take courses in other disciplines at Karlstad University or another university, or use the semester for studies abroad. The sixth and final semester offers specialisation in media and communication studies theory and methodology. It also includes an independent project comprising 15 credits.

As part of the discipline of media and communication studies, a gender equality perspective is integrated in various ways throughout the programme, as are issues on sustainable development. The programme is based on student-centred learning, combining lectures, seminars, workshops and project work.

Programme curriculum

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

Semester 1

Introduction to media and communication studies (15 credits)

Text, communication and organisation (15 credits)

Semester 2

Visual communication design I (30 credits)

Semester 3

Visual communication design II (30 credits)

Semester 4

Strategic digital communication (30 credits)

Semester 5

Free elective courses (30 credits)

Semester 6

Visual communication design III (30 credits)

Title of qualification

Degree of Bachelor of Arts

Major: Media and Communication Studies

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.