



Faculty of Health, Science and Technology

Programme Syllabus

Health, Environment and Society – Bachelor Programme in Public Health Sciences

Programme code:	VGHMS
Programme title:	Health, Environment and Society – Bachelor Programme in Public Health Sciences <i>Hälsa, miljö och samhälle – Kandidatprogram i folkhälsovetenskap</i>
Credits:	180
Programme approval:	The programme syllabus was approved by the Faculty Board of Health, Science and Technology on 12 September 2024, effective from the autumn semester of 2025.
Language of instruction:	Swedish and English
Education cycle:	First (Bachelor's level)
Degree type:	General Degree of Bachelor with the possibility of a Higher Education Diploma
Degree title:	Degree of Bachelor of Social Science. Main field of study: Public Health Sciences
Entry requirements:	General entry requirements. Specific entry requirements: Mathematics 2a/2b/2c and Civics 1b/1a1/1a2 or equivalent. Optional courses may have other requirements.

General information

The Health, Environment and Society programme concludes with a Degree of Bachelor of Social Science with a major in Public Health Sciences. The programme focuses on the state of public health, its distribution and change across populations. Particular focus is on the importance of living conditions, lifestyles, the environment, social structures, and health care systems to health development. The overall aim is to work towards good, equal health among the population.

The Health, Environment and Society programme is an interdisciplinary bachelor's programme that yields broad, multifaceted knowledge about how to work from a societal, group, and individual level to utilise people's skills and resources from a public health perspective. The study programme comprises methods and tools applicable in practice to promote health and preventative actions on different levels of society. Studies are tied to practical public health work in ways including study visits, guest lectures, practical course components, and practical placement.

Public health scientists work to improve public health by studying, analysing, and influencing health determinants in society. A Public Health graduate's professional prospects include project management, mapping and identification, action planning, the performance or commissioning of health-promoting and preventative action, investigation of organisations' public health initiatives, evaluation of public health projects, et cetera. A public health scientist can be employed in a municipality, a region, the government, the private sector, or NGOs. Graduates move on to titles such as public health coordinator, public health strategist, business developer, and public health planner.

There is also the option to continue studies at the master's level.

Programme outcomes

The Higher Education Ordinance, System of Qualifications, specifies the outcomes required for certain degrees. The outcomes for a Degree of Bachelor are as follows:

National outcomes

The Higher Education Act stipulates:

First-cycle courses and study programmes shall develop:

- the ability of students to make independent and critical assessments
- the ability of students to identify, formulate and solve problems autonomously
- the preparedness of students to deal with changes in working life.

In addition to knowledge and skills in their field of study, students shall develop the ability to:

- gather and interpret information at a scholarly level
- stay abreast of the development of knowledge, and
- communicate their knowledge to others, including those who lack specialist knowledge in the field.

The Higher Education Ordinance further stipulates the national outcomes for a Degree of Bachelor:

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.

Students can also opt to complete the programme with a Higher Education Diploma, 120 credits, by completing the course “Scientific research methods in public health sciences – literature study”, 7.5 credits.

Programme structure

The Health, Environment and Society study programme (180 credits) comprises three years of full-time studies. Instruction is in the form of lectures (recorded or in real time), seminars, and group discussions via a digital platform. In addition, the programme also requires self-study including reading course literature and teaching materials, group work, and individual assignments. The examination formats vary throughout the programme and are specified in each course syllabus. During the programme, examinations take place at local study centres and there are four to six on-campus meetings in Karlstad, each lasting 1-3 days, usually once per semester.

The study programme is characterised by instruction with a foundation in practice, systematically in partnership with external organisations both regionally and nationally through lectures, seminars, assignments, and scheduled practical placement. With regard to the main field of study, progression is achieved by the constant integration of theory and practice throughout the study programme, with a steady increase in demands and in-depth, specialised complexity over three years.

As part of the study programme, students have the opportunity to complete a practical placement in their future field of employment. The practical placement is meant to provide students with knowledge and opportunities for reflection in relation to their future professional role. Highlighting the relationship between theory and practice is an important aspect of the practical placement, both as a way to acquire new knowledge and as a way to relate academic studies closely to professional activities. Students arrange their practical placement themselves with support from the course coordinator and the programme director. The University cannot guarantee external placements.

Internationalisation

Karlstad University is working actively with internationalisation of both education and research. Internationalisation is an important part of improving the quality of the education provided, and to be able to offer a wider selection of courses and programmes. Karlstad University has close collaborations with more than 250 higher education institutions around the world. Students are therefore encouraged to complete part of the programme at a university abroad. Semester 5 consists of optional courses that enable internationalisation by studying courses in English. During semester 6, students have the option to complete a degree project and do their practical placement abroad.

Programme curriculum

The programme is based on public health sciences as the main field of study. Mandatory courses in public health sciences comprise a total of 105 credits, and cover courses at both

Health, Environment and Society – Bachelor Programme in Public Health
Sciences, 180 credits Approved 12 September 2024
entry level (30 credits) and specialised study in the main field (75 credits).

Study route:

Semester 1

The first semester of the programme includes mandatory entry-level courses.

- Introduction to public health science, 15 credits (mandatory)
- Introduction to qualitative and quantitative research methods, 7.5 credits (mandatory)
- Health promotion I, 7.5 credits (mandatory)

Semester 2

The second semester begins with an entry-level course and ends with two mandatory advanced courses.

- Living habits – physiology and health, 15 credits (optional, recommended)
- Health promotion II, 7.5 credits (mandatory)
- Project management and evaluation in public health work, 7.5 credits (mandatory)

Semester 3

The third semester comprises two mandatory advanced courses.

- Health, environment and sustainable development, 15 credits (mandatory)
- Epidemiology and public health work, 15 credits (mandatory)

Semester 4

The fourth semester consists of courses at 50 % pace, including 15 credits in the main field of study that are mandatory. The literature study course is an advanced course. Another 15 credits consist of optional courses.

- Scientific research methods in public health sciences – literature study, 7.5 credits (mandatory)
- Organisation, political governance and public health work, 7.5 credits (mandatory)
- Optional course, 15 credits

Semester 5

This semester consists of 30 credits worth of optional courses. There are recommended courses, one of which is at master's level*.

- The importance of the environment for health and development*, 7.5 credits (optional, recommended)
- Domestic violence, 7.5 credits (optional, recommended)
- Optional course, 15 credits

Semester 6

Semester 6 consists of two advanced-level courses, of which 15 credits are mandatory and 15 credits comprise optional courses.

- Public health science: degree project, 15 credits (mandatory)
- Public health science: practical training, 15 credits (optional, recommended)

Credit transfer

Students have the right to transfer credits from previously completed university courses in Sweden or abroad, subject to approval according to the current regulations.

Additional information

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

The course “Public health science: practical training I”, 7.5 credits, cannot be included in a degree together with “Public health science: practical training”, 15 credits.

This programme syllabus will replace the previous version approved 4 February 2021, reg. no: HNT 2021/67.