HÖGSKOLAN
I SKÖVDE

Guidelines for the Design of Programme Syllabi[1]

These guidelines were ratified by the Faculty Board on June 12, 2024 and became valid on the same day.

Registration number HS 2025/462

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[1] This is a translation of the Swedish version (Riktlinjer för utformning av utbildningsplan, registration number HS 2024/346). In the event of any discrepancy, the Swedish version of this document shall prevail.

Table of contents

1 General about programme syllabi and study programmes

Rules concerning programme syllabi can be found in the Higher Education Ordinance (Chapter 6) where it is stated that study programmes must have a programme syllabus, and that the courses of the programme must have course syllabi. In addition, SUHF (the Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions) has issued recommendations concerning programme syllabi[2].

The programme syllabus is, alongside course syllabi and the System of Qualifications, an important document for the governance of the University's courses and study programmes. It is an important educational instrument and, legally speaking, a regulation. A regulation is general and is legally binding for the higher education institution and the students. Significant care must therefore be taken when designing programme syllabi.

These guidelines refer to other governing documents at the University of Skövde (the University). The governing documents are available on the University's website (www.his.se/styrdokument) and on the internal web pages (Staff Portal).

1.1 General rules and objectives

When planning a programme design of the programme syllabus, it is important to consider the general provisions and goals for higher education outlined in the Higher Education Act and other national and local governing documents.

In the Higher Education Act, it is stated that aspects to be highlighted in higher education include broadened recruitment, ethical issues related to research and education, relevance for research, sustainable development, gender equality, internationalization, quality assurance, collaboration with the surrounding community, and student influence.

The Discrimination Act requires universities to make targeted efforts to actively promote equal rights and opportunities for students participating in or applying to their programmes, regardless of gender, gender identity, ethnic origin, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation, or age.

The aspects of sustainable development and gender equality are to be particularly emphasized in programme syllabi and course syllabi.

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[2] "Rekommendationer om kursplaner, utbildningsplaner och betygssystem", Rek 2011:1, Dnr 10/118 (Recommendations for Course Syllabi, Programme Syllabi and Grading Systems)

1.2   Routines when designing programme syllabi

The programme syllabus needs to be designed in an overall standard way and be created in KursInfo, the university's local education database. The template generated by KursInfo is based on the description of the programme syllabus in these guidelines.

According to the Language Act, regulations issued by a Swedish authority must be in Swedish. Therefore, the programme syllabus must be written in Swedish. The Swedish version of the programme syllabus is the legally binding one. If the educational programme is offered in English, the programme syllabus is to be translated into English. The English version of the programme syllabus must indicate that it is a translation. KursInfo provides some support for translating the programme syllabus into English. Even if the programme syllabus is not translated, the programme's name must be indicated in both Swedish and English when registering in KursInfo[3].

The Faculty Board makes the decisions on new programme syllabi. Decisions on revisions to a programme syllabus are made by the Curriculum Committees for First- and Second-Cycle Studies. Specific instructions for working with curricula are available in the Staff Portal.

The process for establishing a new programme is described in the "Guidelines for Establishment of Courses and Study Programmes." The decision to include a programme in the current programmes offered by the university is made by the Vice-Chancellor and is based on a proposal from the relevant Head of School.

1.3   Other information regarding a study programme

In addition to the details specified for the programme syllabus, other information about a programme is stored in KursInfo, such as the name of the programme coordinator, a popular description, and various keywords. This information is displayed, among other places, on the university's website and on antagning.se.

1.4   Deadline for Publishing the Programme Syllabus before Programme Start

Before the start of a programme, the programme syllabus and other information[4] about the programme must be published on the university's internet platform as early as possible. This must be done

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[3] An English name is required for students to obtain various types of study certificates in English.

[4] Other information includes details such as study mode (on-campus or distance learning) and language of instruction (Swedish, English, or both Swedish and English).

no later than the start of the application period for the relevant programme session. The programme syllabus and other information cannot not be changed after this specified deadline. The stated deadline is set in accordance with the statements from the Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ) in this area[5].

The deadline concerns changes to the programme syllabus and other information before the start of a programme. In some cases, however, changes may need to be made to the programme syllabus and its courses after a programme has started (see Section 3.8).

A specific timeline for studying administrative routines is available in the Staff Portal.

2 The Main Header of the Programme Syllabus

In the main header of the programme syllabus, which serves as the title for the document, the Swedish name of the programme and the programme's credits (hp) are indicated. The header also includes more information related to the formal aspects of the programme syllabus (see Section 2.3).

2.1 Name

According to the interpretation of the Language Act[6] by the Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ), the programme's name must be in Swedish.

The name should not exceed 100 characters, excluding higher credits (hp). For search engine optimization on the web, a maximum of 50 characters is recommended. Abbreviations are not allowed in the name. More information about deciding a name can be found in the "Guidelines for Naming University Programmes."

2.2 Scope

The scope of the educational programme in credits (hp) must be aligned with the degree to which the programme is a part[7]. This means that first-cycle programmes should comprise 120 or 180 credits, and second-cycle programmes should normally comprise 60 or 120 credits.

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[5] UKÄ:s tillsynsPM: Inom vilken tid bör kurs- och utbildningsplaner vara fastställda och tillgängliga för studenterna? Reg.nr 32-00481-17 (UKÄ's supervisory report: By what time should course and programme syllabi be ratified and made available to students) and UKÄ 2020:14, Tillsyn av regeltillämpningen vid Högskolan i Skövde (Supervision of rule application at the University of Skövde)
[6] Högskolans regler i praktiken, Universitetskanslersämbetet, Rapport 2014:16 (The University's Rules in Practice)
[7] Local System of Qualifications at the University of Skövde

2.3 Detailed information

The main header of the programme syllabus includes detailed information related to the programme syllabus. This includes:

- Programme code

- Revision number

- Date of coming into effect (the date from when the programme syllabus applies)

- Decision-making body

- Date of the decision

3 Sections of the Programme Syllabus

The various sections of the programme syllabus are described below. The headings in this section are identical to the headings in the programme syllabus template.

For some of the sections, standard phrases are provided in the programme syllabus template. These are phrased in accordance with the guidelines provided here and are detailed in specific instructions[8].

3.1 General Information about a Programme

The introductory section of the programme syllabus specifies the details about a programme as indicated in the header. This includes the name in Swedish and credits (see Section 2). Furthermore, it includes the programme's English name, educational level, and main field/specialization.

The regulations regarding the Swedish name of the programme, including the character limit, apply equally to the English name (see Section 2.1).

The educational level of the programme is either "first cycle" or "second cycle" The educational level is determined by the programme degree (see Section 3.7).

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[8] "Anvisningar för standardtext i utbildningsplan" (Guidelines for standard text in programme syllabus)

If the programme is part of a general degree, the main field must be specified, indicating the subject area for which the degree is awarded (see Section 3.7).

3.2 Admission Requirements

Admission to a programme requires certain prerequisites, known as admission requirements (entry requirments). The entry requirements are categorized as "general entry requirements"which is required for all higher education, and "specific entry requirements" which may include additional prerequisites for a particular programme. The general entry requirements and specific entry requirements are specified in the Higher Education Ordinance, regulations from the Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR), and the university's local admission regulations. The programme's entry requirements must align with the entry requirements for the courses included in the programme.

If the programme is conducted in English, proficiency in English equivalent to Engelska 6 or its equivalent must be specified as an entry requirement.

In KursInfo, there are standardized ways to specify entry requirements. It is advisable to use this standard wherever possible. The standardization allows for automatic verification of eligibility in the admission system against information available in other systems.

At the end of this section, it should also be noted that the requirements for continued studies within the programme are outlined in each course syllabus. Exceptions apply to programmes where progression requirements are applied. Progression requirements are specified in the programme syllabus and state that a certain number of completed courses and/or credits within the programme are required for students to advance to the next academic year.

3.3 Content

A description is to be provided of how the programme is structured and how this contributes to its progression. It should outline what, on several levels, students gain by following the programme's syllabus. The programme's courses must collectively contribute to achieving its various goals. The connection between goals and courses should be outlined in an objective matrix. This matrix is to be updated when courses change. Templates for matrices are available on the Staff Portal.

A gender equality perspective is to be integrated into the design and implementation of a programme. How gender equality integration is

carried out in the various programme courses must be clearly expressed in the matrix.

An internationalization perspective should be integrated into the design and implementation of the programme. Furthermore, first-cycle programmes comprising at least 180 credits should normally be structured to provide opportunities for students to study and/or do an internship abroad for at least one term. In these programmes, there should typically also be courses totaling at least 30 credits that are particularly suitable for incoming students (students from universities outside Sweden).

When planning the sequence of courses, consideration must be given to the prerequisites of courses and students' opportunities for admission in subsequent terms. If possible, a course that has a previous programme course as a prerequisite should not be scheduled in a term immediately afterward.

The description of the course sequence in the programme syllabus should be such, for example, that minor changes in the distribution of courses, do not necessitate changes to the programme syllabus .

In the national degree regulations, all degrees consist of a specific number of credits. For that reason, programmes leading to these degrees must also comprise an exact number of credits (see Item 2.2). Any supporting courses, such as introductory courses in computer use or preparatory mathematics courses, must either be integrated into the programme syllabus (either separately or within other programme courses) or be entirely optional for students (and thus not included in the programme syllabus). All courses in the programme syllabus must be included in the degree.

All courses in the programme must be listed. Courses must be named as they are in the course syllabi and categorized by subject area, level of progression, or any specific programme or other appropriate groupings.

When the programme includes "elective" credits, it should be clear which courses students can choose from. If students can freely choose courses, these credits are considered "optional."

3.4 General Objectives

The general objectives for first or second cycle education are specified in the Higher Education Act.

3.5 Programme Goals

The objectives of a programme consist of the national degree objectives for the programme degree. These objectives are outlined in the Degree Regulations (appendix to the Higher Education

Ordinance) and are also included in the "Local Degree Regulations at Högskolan i Skövde." If an educational programme leads to dual degrees, such as a professional degree and a general degree, the goals for both degrees must be specified in the programme syllabus.

In addition to the national goals, local goals for the programme may also be specified. These local goals can clarify the programme's content and purpose, as well as describe the connection between the specific knowledge area of the programme and various general aspects related to quality in higher education[9].

3.6   Language of Instruction

Information about the programme's language of instruction must be provided in the programme syllabus. The language of instruction can be Swedish, English, or both Swedish and English.

If the language of instruction is Swedish, occasional components, such as certain lectures in respective courses, may be conducted in English. However, the majority of instruction—and all examinations—within the programme must be conducted in Swedish.

In cases where English is specified as the language of instruction for recruiting international students, all instruction within the programme must be offered in English. If the programme is conducted in both Swedish and English, meaning that certain courses or parts of courses are entirely in English, this bilingual approach should be clearly indicated in the information provided.

3.7   Degree

A university programme must lead to a degree. Under this heading, the degree designation in both Swedish and English must be specified. The designation is regulated by national and local degree regulations.

If the programme has two different degrees, this should be indicated. In cases where the programme has multiple specializations (main fields) and these determine which degree can be awarded, this must be clearly outlined in the programme syllabus.

The programme syllabus must also state that the degree certificate is given upon special application.

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[9] Such aspects could include "equality" or "internationalization". See also section 1.1 in these guidelines and "Handlingsplan för jämställdhetsintegrering vid Högskolan i Skövde 2020-2022" (Action Plan for Gender Mainstreaming at the University of Skövde 2020-2022).

Normally, there is no reference to the programme on the degree certificate. If such a reference still is to be made on the degree certificate, this must be indicated in the programme syllabus.

3.8   Amendment of Programme Syllabus

Students commencing a programme should, as far as possible, be given information what is expected of them already at the start of the programme. However, there needs to be flexibility for the university to implement changes to the programme syllabus during the programme's duration. Reasons for such changes may include the need to replace a course or make alterations that affect the course name, aimed at enhancing pedagogic aspects. In some cases, changes may be based on feedback received from students in previous versions. Therefore, the programme syllabus includes a provision that the programme syllabus and its courses may be subject to change. However, these changes should not affect the programme's objectives (see Section 3.5).

Major revisions to a programme syllabus typically apply to future versions of the programme from its start and do not impact students already enrolled in the programme.

3.9   Student Influence

Student views are a central aspect of the university's programmes and courses. Students should be encouraged to actively participate in the learning processes throughout their studies. Ensuring student views is achieved through programme evaluations.

The programme syllabus must include information stating that programme evaluation will be done. It should also specify that students will be informed about the results of the evaluation and any actions taken or planned based on the results.

3.10   Miscellaneous

In the programme syllabus, there should be references to additional information available on the university's website. This information pertains to both the specific programme and general information about governing documents for the university.

Information may also be provided about collaborations within the programme with other institutions or external parties, as well as the possibility that the educational location may be other than Skövde.

Any other relevant information about the programme can also be included under the section titled "Miscellaneous."

4 This document is in effect as of

This document is in effect as of June 12, 2024, and replaces the "Guidelines for the Design of Programme Syllabi" (registration number HS 2024/224).