

International master's programme in Outdoor and sustainability education

Master i Utomhus- och hållbarhetspedagogik
120 credits

L7MUH

Valid from: 2026 Autumn semester

Determined by

The Board of Educational Science

Date determined

2025-03-27

Revised by

Course Syllabus Board at the Faculty of Educational Sciences

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2025-09-08

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LiU-2025-01207; LiU-2025-01802

Offered first time

Autumn semester 2026

Offered for the last time

Replaced by

Introduction

Outdoor education relates to subject-integrated Environment and Sustainability Education as well as to disciplinary teaching in various subjects. The programme trains students in using environments outside of the traditional classroom for teaching and learning. The programme strives for a good balance between theoretical in-depth study and practical action-based knowledge. The teaching is based on the natural and cultural landscape and relates these experiences to current research through lectures and literature seminars.

Purpose

The aim is for the student to develop a scientific basis for qualified educational science work in the field of outdoor education with a special focus on Environmental and Sustainability Education. The programme aims to develop practice-related professional skills and knowledge in the above fields of knowledge. The programme creates conditions for developing scientific knowledge and practical competence. The purpose of the programme is also to prepare the student for doctoral education and research.

Aim

Master's degree (120 credits)

Knowledge and understanding

For a Degree of Master of Science, the student must

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including both broad knowledge in the field and significantly elaborated knowledge in certain parts of the field as well as in-depth insight into current research and development work, and
- demonstrate enhanced methodological knowledge in the main field of study.

Skills and abilities

For a Degree of Master of Science, the student must

- demonstrate the ability to critically and systematically integrate knowledge and to analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations also with incomplete information,
- demonstrate the ability to critically, independently and creatively identify and formulate issues, to plan and, using adequate methods, carry out advanced tasks within given time frames and thereby contribute to the development of knowledge, and to evaluate this work,
- demonstrate the ability to clearly account for and discuss their conclusions and the knowledge and arguments that form the basis for these in dialogue

- with different groups in both national and international contexts, and
- demonstrate the skills required to participate in research and development work or to work independently in other qualified activities.

Judgement and approach

For a Degree of Master of Science, the student must

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments within the main field of study with regard to relevant scientific, social and ethical aspects and demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work,
- demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of science, its role in society and people's responsibility for how it is used, and
- demonstrate the ability to identify their need for further knowledge and to take responsibility for their knowledge development.

Master's degree (60 credits)

Knowledge and understanding

For a Master's degree, the student must

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including both an overview of the field and elaborated knowledge in certain parts of the field as well as insight into current research and development work, and
- demonstrate enhanced methodological knowledge in the main field of study.

Skills and abilities

For a Master's degree, the student must

- demonstrate the ability to integrate knowledge and to analyse, assess and handle complex phenomena, issues and situations even with limited information,
- demonstrate the ability to independently identify and formulate issues and to plan and, using adequate methods, carry out advanced tasks within given time frames,
- demonstrate the ability to orally and in writing clearly account for and discuss their conclusions and the knowledge and arguments that form the basis for these in dialogue with different groups, and
- demonstrate the skills required to participate in research and development work or to work in other qualified activities.

Judgement and approach

For a Master's degree, the student must

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments within the main field of study with regard to relevant scientific, social and ethical aspects and demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of research and development

- work,
- demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of science, its role in society and people's responsibility for how it is used, and
- demonstrate the ability to identify their need for further knowledge and to take responsibility for their knowledge development.

Specification of the above objectives is stated in the programme's respective course syllabi.

Content

The programme is a two-year master's programme with the possibility to study towards a master's degree in one year.

The programme begins with a course that deals with outdoor education in relation to interdisciplinary and subject-focused teaching. This is followed by a course focusing on environmental and sustainability education and how experiences in natural and cultural environments can constitute an important component of learning. In preparation for essay writing and structured development work, a course that deals with philosophy of science and research methods follows. During the second semester, two courses are run at half-speed. A theoretical specialization course and an in-depth course with a focus on the practice of outdoor education.

The second year begins with a course focusing on the place as a learning environment that deepens the connection between places, cognitive processes and sustainability. In addition, the programme is individualised with an electable course given in collaboration with other programmes at Linköping University. It is also possible to transfer credits for courses with relevant content from other higher education institutions. The focus in the second year is on preparing students for research and development work. The thesis course of 30 credits is the largest component. This is supported by a course in method specialization and a course that provides practical experience of research and development in academic or outdoor educational environments.

Students who wish to obtain a one-year master's degree (60 credits) generally take the same courses in the first year as those who are going to obtain the full master's degree (120 credits). The difference is that during semester 2, the courses Cognition and Learning in the Anthropocene and Specialization in Outdoor Education are replaced with a degree project of 15 credits.

To facilitate planning, students are asked at the start of the programme if they wish to obtain a one-year or a full master's degree, but it is possible to choose to continue to a full master's degree. It is also possible for former students to build on with a second year and obtain a two-year master's degree.

Teaching and working methods

Teaching is partly conducted outdoors during different seasons. Students therefore need to have clothes and shoes that are suitable for this. Lesser costs for accommodation and regional travel will be added.

Student-centered working methods where students work in small groups are common. Teaching methods include fieldwork, lectures and seminars. Examination forms are usually individual written assignments.

Entry requirements

- A Teacher or Pre-school Teacher Degree of at least 180 ECTS credits
or
Bachelor's Degree, equivalent to a Swedish Kandidatexamen, with a major in one of the following subjects Education, Pedagogy, Pedagogical work, Biology, Ecology, Geography or Sustainable development
or
Bachelor's degree, equivalent to a Swedish Kandidatexamen, and additional clearly documented work experience of at least one year, full time, in outdoor or sustainability education or the equivalent
- English corresponding to the level of English in Swedish upper secondary education (Engelska 6 eller Engelska nivå 2)
Exemption from Swedish

Degree thesis

For a Degree of Master (120 credits), the student must, within the framework of the course requirements, have completed an independent project (degree project) of at least 30 credits (15 for a Degree of Master, 60 credits) in the main field of study.

Degree requirements

For the Degree of Master of Arts (120 credits), the student must have completed course requirements of 120 credits, of which at least 90 credits must consist of courses at advanced level, of which at least 60 credits including independent project in each main field of study.

For the Degree of Master of Arts (60 credits), the student must have completed course requirements of 60 credits, of which at least 45 credits must consist of courses at advanced level, of which at least 30 credits including independent work in each main field of study.

Degree in Swedish

Filosofie magisterexamen med huvudområde Pedagogik - inriktning mot utomhus- och hållbarhetspedagogik

Filosofie masterexamen med huvudområde Pedagogik - inriktning mot utomhus- och hållbarhetspedagogik

Degree in English

Degree of Master of Science (60 credits) with a major in Education - specialisation in Outdoor and sustainability pedagogy

Degree of Master of Science (120 credits) with a major in Education - specialisation in Outdoor and sustainability pedagogy

Specific information

Deviations from programme syllabus.

If special circumstances prevail, the vice-chancellor may in a special decision specify the preconditions for temporary deviations from this programme syllabus, and delegate the right to take such decisions.

Curriculum

Semester 1 (Autumn 2026)

Course code	Course name	Credits	Level	Weeks	ECV
947A16	Outdoor Learning in Theory and Practice	15	A1N	v202634-202643	C
947A14	Theories of Research and Methods of Inquiry	15*	A1N	v202644-202713	C
947A15	Environmental and Sustainability Education in the Natural and Cultural Landscape	15*	A1N	v202644-202723	C

Semester 2 (Spring 2027)

Course code	Course name	Credits	Level	Weeks	ECV
947A14	Theories of Research and Methods of Inquiry	15*	A1N	v202644-202713	C
947A15	Environmental and Sustainability Education in the Natural and Cultural Landscape	15*	A1N	v202644-202723	C

ECV = Elective / Compulsory / Voluntary

*Kursen läses över flera terminer