



Programme syllabus

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Design + Change, 180 högskolepoäng

Design + Change, 180 credits

Level

First cycle

Date of Ratification

Approved 2014-09-15.

Revised 2025-11-28.

The programme syllabus is valid from autumn semester 2026.

Prerequisites

General entry requirements + approved portfolio and English 6.

Or: approved portfolio and English level 2

Description of Programme

Design plays a crucial role in all people's lives and affects individuals and economies both locally and globally. Design is, historically as well as today, deeply intertwined with consumption, with significant impact on the environment as well as with social injustices and political ideologies, and thereby also the challenges facing the world. This applies not least to the climate crisis. Despite this, there are also opportunities opening up: designers and activists have through different times both challenged the contemporary norms of society and contributed to profound changes. Through giving shape and form to ideas and possibilities, to alternative sustainable futures and a systemic and holistic engagement with sustainability, design can make a difference at local, regional, and global levels.

How can design be used as a tool to achieve change? In the programme Design + Change, the students approach this question with creativity, curiosity, and critical thinking. The programme is intended for students who want to use design to make a difference in the world. The programme combines creative expression with knowledge of a holistic perspective on sustainability, with a focus on contributing to creating sustainable changes at local, regional as well as global levels.

The programme is offered on artistic basis and develops competence within two core areas and three supporting areas:

Core area 1: Design – design methods such as mapping, sketching, prototyping, two-dimensional and three-dimensional artistic articulation and moving image, and emergent areas of design.

Core area 2: Change – theoretical, scientific, contextual perspectives on change and sustainability.

Supporting area 1: Collaboration, community and care – facilitation, communication, and ethics in complex collaborations with different societal stakeholders and different species.

Supporting area 2: Learning and curiosity – study technique, pedagogical perspectives, methods for investigation.

Supporting area 3: Communication for impact – communication principles, platforms, stakeholder strategies to implement design for change.

Teaching is delivered primarily in the form of lectures, seminars, workshops and supervision, and takes place in the classroom, the university's workshop facilities, as well as during field studies. Emphasis is put on the student's own creative and explorative work, individually or in groups with regular feedback in the form of supervision, presentations and examinations.

The student meets practicing designers, artists and researchers among teachers and invited guests from the field represented by design, and national and international practitioners and researchers active within sustainability and change work.

Leading and conducting design and change processes by integrating a systemic and holistic focus on sustainability is a consistent theme. Many courses are conducted in close collaboration with the surrounding society, such as industry, business, organisations, local governance and the local population. Several courses have a marked international perspective.

The student becomes well-equipped for working in design in interdisciplinary environments with a focus on sustainable change locally, regionally, and globally.

This entails, for example, working with design and change processes at both strategic and operational levels within organisations that focus on sustainable changes, such as design companies and other companies with a focus on sustainability, communication organisations and non-profit organisations, initiatives driven by local communities and municipalities, and their own companies and organisations – individually or in clusters.

The programme prepares for further studies at advanced level.

Design + Change is an international programme which prepares the students for an international career and also facilitates diversity in the student group. All teaching is delivered in English.

Objectives

Central qualitative targets according to the Higher Education Ordinance

Knowledge and understanding

For a Degree of Bachelor of Fine Arts the student shall

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the principal field (main field of study), including knowledge of the practical and theoretical foundation of the field, knowledge and experience of methods and processes in the field as well as specialised study within the field.

Competence and skills

For a Degree of Bachelor of Fine Arts the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to describe, analyse and interpret design, techniques and content as well as to reflect critically on their own artistic approach and that of others in the main field of study ,
- demonstrate the ability in the main field of study to create, realise and express their own ideas, identify, formulate and solve artistic and creative problems autonomously and to undertake artistic tasks within predetermined time frames,
- demonstrate the ability to present and discuss their works and artistic issues in speech, writing or in other ways and in dialogue with different audiences and,
- demonstrate the competence and knowledge required to work autonomously in a professional capacity.

Judgement and approach

For a Degree of Bachelor of Fine Arts the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the main field of study informed by relevant artistic, social and ethical issues,
- demonstrate insight into the role of art in society,
- demonstrate the ability to identify the need for further knowledge and ongoing learning.

Programme-specific objectives

After completing the degree, the student should be able to

- demonstrate knowledge of and the ability to critically and creatively apply understanding of how artistic creativity, design knowledge and tools can be applied at the levels of products and systems, and demonstrate the ability to make independent judgements as regards what type of design activity is best suited to address a particular challenge,
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how to critically and creatively apply a selection of research methods within design,
- demonstrate knowledge of and the ability to critically and creatively apply understanding of systems in general and the complex interplay of ecological, economic, social and cultural dimensions of sustainability and the influence of design in these contexts in particular,
- compare and assess various theories and processes of change and critically and creatively relate them to their own designer role, and demonstrate various perspectives on and competence in using design to create sustainable futures,
- demonstrate the ability to cooperate constructively and creatively in groups within and across subjects and with the surrounding society, as well as to facilitate collaborations.

Content

Content and Structure

Programme co-ordinator and programme council

The programme is led by a programme co-ordinator who is responsible for quality assurance, development and co-ordination of the programme. A programme council works for the long-term and strategic development of the programme.

Programme Overview

The programme consists of six semesters which are divided into modules. The programme gradually develops the student's knowledge, understanding and ability on the basis of two core progression perspectives:

1. From design at detailed level to design at comprehensive level.
2. From individual and local values, interests and incentives to global ones.

The two perspectives on progression meet and are integrated in all courses and are supported by collaborations between practical design, theory and artistic creativity. This educational approach enables learning through practical work, experience, theory, articulation and reflection. Throughout the degree, the student is introduced to methods related to design, design methods, and methods relevant for investigation and exploration.

Programme courses

*= course within the main field of study

YEAR 1

Design Tools 30 credits* (G1N)

The first semester of the programme focuses on the student developing a solid foundation as regards design skills, and the role of the designer in futures of sustainability. There is a strong emphasis on establishing a safe and creative working environment for both the individual student and the group.

The student acquires basic knowledge and experience of design tools for two-dimensional and three-dimensional design as well as moving images. The student is familiarised with essential frameworks and tools for design for sustainability and explores values and interests for the individual and the group. The student works with projects, individually and in groups.

Modules:

Introduction Sustainability and creativity, 7.5 credits

Design 2D, 7.5 credits

Design 3D, 7.5 credits

Design moving images, 7.5 credits

Design Processes 30 credits* (G1F)

In the second semester of the programme the student acquires an understanding of and ability to apply design processes, individually and in collaborations. More advanced tools and methods for research, idea generation and artistic interpretation are introduced. The student develops an understanding of user perspectives and contextual design, as well as relevant methods for this. The student develops an understanding of design in the context of sustainability and change by exploring themes such as needs, time, systems.

Modules:

Design processes and methods 1, Design relay, 7,5 credits

Design processes and methods 2, Time, 7,5 credits

Design processes and methods 3, Human needs vs. consumption 7.5 credits

Design processes and methods 4, Resilience, 7,5 credits

YEAR 2

Design practice 30 credits* (G1F)

The third semester includes an introduction to emerging design fields such as speculative design and design for social innovation. The student develops critical, artistic, and creative abilities through projects which explore various design areas, such as speculative design and design of learning experiences. The sustainability perspectives are developed through critical thinking on how norms influence the design process and potential consequences of this.

Modules:

Design practice 1 (Speculative design, critical design), Futures, technology and energy, 7.5 credits

Design practice 2 (Social innovation), Gender and norms, 7.5 credits

Design practice 3 (System and service design), Life and death, 7.5 credits

Design and pedagogy 1, 7.5 credits

Småland, 30 credits* (G2F)

In the fourth semester the student implements and develops their knowledge, understanding and abilities in collaborations with local/regional businesses, organisations and communities. At the end of the semester, the student is given the opportunity for practice placement.

Modules:

Design and pedagogy 2, 7.5 credits

Småland, 15 credits

Power relationships and design/Practice placement, 7.5 credits

Or:

Exchange studies with a specialisation in Design, at a level equivalent to at least G1F. Courses are chosen in consultation with programme/subject representative.

YEAR 3

Change 30 credits* (G2F)

The fifth semester focuses on design as a change agent of economic, ecological, social and cultural systems and the student deepens their use of artistic articulation as exploration and communication in relation to complex contexts and needs. The student is given the opportunity to collaborate with other disciplines at the university and beyond. There is particular emphasis on the understanding, facilitation, design and visualisation of full processes of change.

Modules:

Economic/ecological change, 7.5 credits

Social/cultural change, 7.5 credits

Change, 15 credits

Futures 30 credits* (G2E)

The student builds on their prior knowledge and experiences from previous semesters by further focusing on and working at greater depth with artistic articulation, critical frameworks, and advanced tools for design with a focus on planning, executing and contextualisation an independent project within the main field of study.

Modules:

The state of things, 7.5 credits

Independent project, 15 credits

Show and possibilities, 7.5 credits

Societal relevance

A majority of the programme's courses are delivered in the form of projects in collaboration with the surrounding society. During the fourth semester the student is given the opportunity to conduct a five-week practice placement. The student decides where to conduct the practice placement in consultation with the programme co-ordinator.

Internationalisation

During the fourth semester the student is given the opportunity to study abroad at one of the universities with which Linnaeus University has agreements. Courses are chosen in consultation with the programme co-ordinator.

The programme is delivered in English in order to welcome international students and to give the student access to a future international field of work. The Department of Design participates actively in international networks such as Cumulus and Desis, which provide platforms for knowledge exchange through joint projects and student and teaching staff exchanges.

Sustainable development

The whole of the programme is characterised by a perspective of sustainability, from an initial introduction to ecological systems to a wide understanding of systems' resilience and ability to recover, as well as the specific opportunities for design to contribute to sustainability. During the first three semesters the student acquires knowledge about tools for design for sustainability. In the project courses in the following three semesters, these tools are used in increasingly complex contexts and with the students' increasing independence.

The perspective of sustainability which characterises the whole of the programme includes a gender perspective and norm criticism, which are developed in the module Design practice 2. In this module, the student acquires tools to incorporate these perspectives in the design practice. There is particular emphasis on supporting the student in developing a critical stance on how norms influence the design process, and the consequences this may have on working methods, products and services.

How these perspectives are integrated throughout the programme and how they are examined is specified in the course syllabus for each respective module.

Quality Development

The quality work has a clear connection to the university's vision and strategy and to the programme syllabus and course syllabi of the programme. The quality work within the subject takes place at teaching staff conferences and subject meetings, as well as through continuous dialogues with the students, formalised in course evaluations. During the sixth semester, a programme evaluation is conducted, and after each course, a course evaluation is conducted. These evaluations are compiled into reports and made available to the students. The reports also include descriptions of what measures of improvement have been taken. The programme and course evaluations are archived by the department. Students, teaching staff and representatives from the surrounding society participate actively in following up and developing the programme through the Programme Advisory Board. The programme is continuously developed to meet the requirements of society.

The Faculty of Arts and Humanities has a quality system for following up and developing our programmes. An education council prepares programme syllabi and other aspects concerning quality, such as the right to award degrees and the range of programmes offered, before the Faculty Board makes the final decisions. Revised and new syllabi are prepared in Syllabus Committees before the Head of Department or the Dean makes the final decision about approval.

The range of courses and programmes offered is regularly evaluated in accordance with the Faculty's plan for systematic quality work.

Degree

After completing their studies, in accordance with the requirements stated in the Qualification Ordinance in the Higher Education Ordinance and in Linnaeus University's local Qualification Ordinance, the student may apply for a degree. Students who have completed the programme Design + Change may obtain the following degree:

Degree of Bachelor of Fine Arts
Main Field of Study: Design

Konstnärlig kandidatexamen
Huvudområde: Design

The degree certificate is issued in two languages (Swedish and English). A Diploma Supplement in English is enclosed with the degree certificate.

Other Information

Students on this programme are given the opportunity to forge networks around the world, work in well-equipped rooms and spend much of their learning time with the teaching team. The programme also supports students' individual development and use of the English language.

After having been awarded the degree, the student is qualified for admission to studies at the advanced level.

The student should be prepared for some costs for material and some study visits each term.

In case of possible discrepancies between the Swedish and English versions of this programme syllabus, the Swedish version is superordinate.