



Programme syllabus

Faculty of Social Sciences

Socionomprogrammet, 210 högskolepoäng
Social Work Study Programme, 210 credits

Level

First cycle

Date of Ratification

Approved 2009-06-17.

Revised 2025-12-29.

The programme syllabus is valid from autumn semester 2026.

Prerequisites

General entry requirements + Mathematics 2a alt. Mathematics 2b alt. Mathematics 2c and Civics 1b alt. Civics 1a1 +1a2.

Or: Mathematics level 2a or Mathematics level 2b or Mathematics level 2c, Social studies level 1b or Social studies level 1a2

Description of Programme

The aim of the Social Work Study Programme is to educate qualified social workers as well as prepare them for further studies. Social work forms the principal field and is based on knowledge and understanding of the interplay between people, the surrounding community and social interventions.

The aim of the Social Work Study Programme is to provide professional competence for the social welfare sector, under public, private and non-profit management, nationally as well as internationally. Social workers work within the fields of preventive social work, clinical treatment, social change work, case management social administration, evaluation and development of social interventions – often in collaboration with other organizations and professions. Management and organization of social practices are other tasks for social workers. Common working areas include social services, health and medical care, schools, treatment centres, social care work with older people and people with disabilities, probation, social insurance, employment offices, migration agencies and other government agencies. The Social Work Study Programme qualifies for studies at second-cycle level.

Objectives

Degree Objectives in accordance with the Higher Education Ordinance

In order to obtain a Bachelor of Science in Social Work, the student shall have acquired the knowledge and ability required for social work at the individual, group and societal level.

Knowledge and Understanding

For a Bachelor of Science in Social Work, the student shall:

- demonstrate knowledge about the disciplinary foundation and knowledge about current research and development work within the field;
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the interplay between individuals' and groups' social situations, living conditions, physical and mental health as well as the individual ability to function in relation to social and other underlying factors;
- demonstrate knowledge of leadership within social work practice;
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a child's needs as well as social conditions and family circumstances that affect the living conditions of both women and men;
- demonstrate knowledge of domestic violence and men's violence against women.

Competence and Skills

For a Bachelor of Science in Social Work, the student shall:

- demonstrate the competence and skills required to develop and conduct social work at different levels of society, cooperating with those people affected;
- demonstrate the ability to apply relevant legislation, in particular within the social area ;
- demonstrate the ability to understand, investigate and analyse social processes and problems;
- demonstrate the ability to identify, structure, investigate and evaluate actions at the individual, group and social level.

Judgement and Approach

For a Bachelor of Science in Social Work, the student shall:

- demonstrate self-awareness and empathetic ability;
- demonstrate the ability to conduct operational assessments with an overall social view of the individual and based upon the relevant scientific, social and ethical aspects, paying particular attention to human rights;
- demonstrate the ability to adopt a professional approach and attitude;
- demonstrate an insight into the importance of team work and cooperation with other professions;
- demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and to develop the individual competence.

Content

The Social Work Study Programme is administered by the Faculty of Social Sciences.

Programme overview

The programme builds upon a theoretical understanding of a person's conditions, the origin of social problems, and interventions within social work. The programme further provides knowledge of the legislation of relevance to practical social work. The Social Work Study Programme provides skills for investigating social needs and issues, evaluating social interventions and integrating scientific knowledge into practical social work. Individual specialisation takes place via elective courses. Professional development permeates the entire programme. Specific components such as supervision and reflection groups aim to develop the student's abilities for a professional approach, empathy and cooperation. The programme includes field studies and work placement training comprising 30 credits. The courses in the programme are studied in the order as follows.

Programme Courses

*= course included in the main field of study

Semester 1

Social Work as Subject, Science and Profession, 15 credits, G1N*

Welfare State Organisation and Principles of Social Policy, 15 credits, G1N*

The programme begins with a basic course in social work as subject, science and profession. The course contains theories from the social sciences and humanities, concepts from the theory of science, ethics and professional approach. After this, the organization and central socio-political principles of the welfare state are studied. The course explores the growth and structure of the Swedish welfare system and its organization and function in Swedish society.

Semester 2

Introduction to the Legal System and Social Law, 15 credits, G1N

Social and Behavioural Science Perspectives in Social Work, 15 credits, G1N*

The first course in semester 2 focuses on the laws relevant to the main area of social work. The course provides an introduction to the legal system and knowledge of civil and criminal law, social law and international conventions on human rights. The second course studies sociological, socio-psychological and psychological theory formulation of importance to social work.

Semester 3

Communication, Approach and Management, 15 credits, G1N*

Administrative Law and Investigative Methodology, 15 credits, G1F

In semester 3, the focus is on interview skills, communication and attitudes in relation to individuals and groups with specific needs, from both a user and leader perspective. The course includes knowledge about leadership of individual operations and at different levels of social work. The second course of semester 3 includes law, focusing on administrative law as well as handling and investigation methods.

Semester 4

Vulnerability, Conditions and Interventions at Individual, Group and Society Level, 15 credits, G2F*

Writing a Dissertation, 7.5 credits, G2F*

Evaluation in Social Work, 7.5 credits, G2F*

At the start of the fourth semester, deeper knowledge is obtained regarding people's vulnerability and mutual and specific living conditions. Moreover, the course focuses on the knowledge of preventive social work, working methods and interventions in social work at the individual, group and social level. The second course tutors academic writing skills for a paper/project area focusing upon vulnerability and social interventions. Semester 4 ends with a course about models for auditing and evaluating social interventions, in addition to research on what constitutes knowledge-based social work.

Semester 5

Social Work Training in the Social Sector, 30 credits, G2F*

The student placement training (VFU) takes place in semester 5. During the teaching period, the social work practice is scrutinised and problematised based on theoretical knowledge and skills under supervision. The course contains elements where the aim is to develop a reflective approach and professional identity. There is a possibility to spend the entire or parts of the semester studying abroad.

Semester 6

Research in Social Work, Theory of Science and Research Methodology, 15 credits, G2F*

Degree Project, 15 credits, G2E*

Semester 6 expands the knowledge of research and development work within a social work frame. The first course provides the students with current research and deepens their knowledge within the theory of science and research methodology. The second course applies methodological skills, analytical ability and aspects of research ethics to an independent project/degree project.

Semester 7

Elective Advanced Course in Social Work, 15 credits, A1N*

Professional Social Work, 15 credits, A1N*

Semester 7 begins with an elective specialisation course at the second-cycle level. The department offers elective courses within specialised areas relevant to social work and related to current research within the field. The courses available reflect the research domains of the department. Students may also choose to study a second-cycle course in social work at another university. The elective courses offered at Linnaeus University may change from semester to semester.

The second course provides advanced knowledge of professional social work, focusing on professionalization processes and the specific competence of social workers in relation to assessments and interventions related to the perspective of knowledge-based social work. The course also focuses on the cooperation with other professions. It is possible to study the entire or part of the semester at another higher education institution in Sweden or abroad, provided that the course content is equivalent. If the student wishes to study elsewhere, consultation with the programme coordinator should take place.

The above-stated courses in the Social Work Study Programme are compulsory for the Degree of Bachelor of Science in Social Work unless otherwise stated above, as is the possibility to study abroad or elective courses. The order of the courses given may change, and some courses may be held in English.

Societal Relevance

The Social Work Study Programme cooperates with care user organisations, government authorities and activities that conduct and develop social work within social welfare, at the local as well as at the national level. Semester five includes student placement training within social work, with professional supervisors. Field studies at workplaces relevant to social work are regularly conducted in the programme. Care user representatives and representatives from different activities participate in the programme on a regular basis.

Students are offered information about future career opportunities and the possibility to participate in voluntary or paid social work within the region.

Internationalisation

The programme prepares the students for work in a society characterised by diversity and globalisation. In several of the courses, students will meet internationally successful teachers/researchers as well as students from other countries. The programme also discusses issues on globalisation, migration and diversity.

The Social Work Study Programme is part of several international networks, entailing active international exchanges for both teachers and students. Students are during the programme given the opportunity to study or conduct their student placement training

abroad, preferably in semester 5. Courses may be studied at a higher education institution abroad, provided that they correspond with the ones to be studied in accordance with the programme syllabus. Students are offered the opportunity to take part in the exchange agreements that Linnaeus University has with foreign higher education institutions, and this takes place primarily from semester four within the programme. Studies abroad shall always be planned in consultation with the internationalisation coordinator at the department.

Scope of Programme

Sustainable Development

The Social Work Study Programme rests upon national and international ethical principles of human rights, the concept of human dignity and social justice as a basis of the development of a socially sustainable society. The programme addresses the concept of sustainable development on the basis of the social, environmental and economic perspectives in a global context, relevant to people's living conditions and conditions of survival as well as good and equal living conditions over time. It comes down to the aim of turning out students with a sustainability approach and sustainability in relation to the profession, which is central for the programme. This may for instance include teaching and methodology practice in individual professional development.

Equal Terms

Within the Social Work Study Programme, work is conducted within the field of equal rights and equal opportunities with the aim of promoting equal terms and equality. The diversity perspective is thus central through the entire programme, and the focus is placed on establishing a long-term sustainable social development. Teaching is based on actively counteracting discrimination and has an ethical perspective.

Broadened Knowledge Perspective

The Social Work Study Programme is a generalist education which requires a breadth in terms of subjects as well as in relation to multifaceted and extensive fields of work. Social work is an interdisciplinary subject and the aim of the programme is for students to develop a critical and ethical approach in a field where also the integration of other subjects takes place. This takes place through complementary studies within other areas of knowledge, and by reading fiction as well as by having critical discussions and conversations in seminars. The studies are based on a combination of theory and practice, and a close connection between the student placement training and the social work practice.

Entrepreneurial Approach

Students reflect on how an entrepreneurial approach may affect and develop the existence of social work. This theme is also addressed through interaction with the society in order to establish more concrete support and to stimulate the development of the students' general competencies, such as communication and cooperation. Interaction may also lead to increased commitment to the surrounding society and the existing processes outside the university. Parts of the programme are further characterised by entrepreneurial learning, since various educational forms are aimed at developing the students' curiosity, responsibility and self-reliance.

Quality Development

The programme assures student influence through written evaluations of each course and the programme, and through student representation in the faculty board, working committee and student representative forums. An evaluation is conducted after each course, and the results are followed up on by the faculty staff. Compilations of various evaluations are accessible through the university.

Degree

After completed studies in accordance with the objectives specified in the Higher Education Ordinance System of Qualifications and the Linnaeus University Local System of Qualifications, the student may apply for a degree. Those having completed the Social Work Study Programme 210 credits can obtain the following qualification:

Degree of Bachelor of Science in Social Work

Socionomexamen

The degree certificate is written in Swedish and English. The degree certificate also comes with a Diploma supplement (in English).

Courses previously given within the same programme code, VGSOP, may also be included in the degree and will then replace courses with equivalent content.

Other Information

Students who complete six terms of the Social Work Study Programme (180 credits) may apply for a Bachelor of Science (main field of study: Social Work).