



Fróðskaparsetur Føroya  
University of the Faroe Islands

Søgu- og samfelagsdeildin  
Department of History and Social Sciences

Programme in  
Master in:  
- Social Science  
- Politics and Administration  
- History

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Commencement April 2021

## Foreword by the Study Board

Dear students

The programme description contains the rules and regulations for your programme. It is therefore, of great importance that you read and understand the curriculum. Along with course descriptions and the overall rules of the University of the Faroe Islands, the curriculum is an important tool at your disposal. That way you will know your rights and your obligations.

According to the rules for the Study Board, the board receives the proposed programme from the course leader for consideration and approval after the course leader has heard and received responses from relevant parties. When the proposal has been considered by the Study Board and the board is assured that relevant parties have been heard, the Study Board approves the curriculum and passes it to the Dean for implementation.

The Study Board is responsible for ensuring that the different parts of the programme are coherent. Furthermore, amendments of individual courses or subject areas should be limited so they still fit with the purpose of the programme. The board must further ensure that teaching and examination requirements are appropriate for the purpose of the programme.

This programme description has been approved by the Study Board of the Department of History and Social Sciences, 6<sup>th</sup> of July 2020.

On behalf of the Board of Studies

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Árni Johan Petersen', is centered on the page.

Árni Johan Petersen, Chairman

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## 1. Introduction to the Master Programme

In the Autumn 2015, the Department of History and Social Science commenced a new Master level programme in History, Social Science and in Politics and Administration based on a common *Master* framework. Specifically, the Master Programme focuses on small states and islands, which is an underlying theme throughout the entire programme. Students thus become academically equipped and with a focus on the context of small states and islands.

The different academic fields within the Master framework meet in a common reflexive ontology and epistemology with the focus on a practice-oriented and context bound science. The programme is, therefore, problem-oriented and interdisciplinary. The Master degree is also a programme developed to provide individual competences that meet the specialised needs of a small but highly modern labour market. Summarised, the programme provides students with the opportunity to specialise within reflexive science, a thematic field, and also to find a personalised theme of specialisation.

The Master programme is research based, and the unity of the programme is its common professional focus on a reflexive, context dependent and practice-oriented science, empirically oriented towards key historical and/or societal problematics and themes of modern societies.

The learning foundation of the Master programme is the idea of learning as an active community of academic practice. As such, it is a form of learning where students are active co-participants in the study course, in the form of professionally organised forums like thematic seminars, colloquiums, study groups, project groups, etc. An important part in the development of a professional academic community of practice and the personal training path, is the problem-oriented project work and close academic-society linkages.

## 2. Jurisdiction

This programme has been written and approved under the authority endowed by current Law about the University of the Faroe Islands (law no. 58 from 9 June 2008, with amendments in law no. 51 from 8 May 2012) and ministerial orders regarding Master's programmes, admission, examinations and grading scales.

The programme and the degree profile have also been written according to the Bologna Process and the Tuning Educational Structures in Europe Process.

The programme does not contain information about general rules and guidelines of the University of the Faroe Islands.

The programme does not contain information about specific courses or course profiles.

The Master's Programme is under the general jurisdiction of the Study Board of the Department of History and Social Sciences which refers to the Dean.

The Programme Director has academic responsibility of the programme and its day-to-day management.

In order to secure and develop the Master framework and individual courses, evaluation will be ongoing.

Please see section 11 for information on complaints and appeals.

## **3. Purpose and organisation**

### **3.1. Purpose**

The programme aims to provide the individual student with competences to identify and analyse complex societal phenomena based on theories, methods, and skills within a plurality of academic traditions.

The programme qualifies students to work in the private, public and non-profit sectors and especially in a small states and islands context.

### **3.2. Prescribed period of study**

The Master programme is prescribed to 120 ECTS points corresponding to two years of full-time study. See section 8 for a description of the programme structure.

## **4. Admission requirements**

### **4.1. Eligibility**

To be considered eligible for enrolment, students:

- Must have passed a bachelor's programme with at least 60 ECTS points within the History and Social Sciences areas.

Or

- Must have obtained equivalent academic qualifications, especially with regard to interdisciplinary competences.

In other cases, e.g. if applicants hold a single disciplinary, a natural science or humanities based bachelor's degree, the Programme Director will make a concrete assessment of the adequacy of history and social science components.

As part of the application, applicants are required to write a letter of motivation explaining their motivations for applying. .

### **4.2. Additional requirements**

- Qualifications within Social Science Methods and/or Historical Methods.

Sufficient qualifications (normally 20 ECTS or equivalent) passed within the subject area Social Science Methods and/or Historical Methods. These qualifications should be at least at a bachelor's level. The Programme Director makes a concrete assessment of the fulfilment of these criteria.

- Language qualifications

For successful completion of the programme, students are required to be able to read and interpret text written in Faroese, English, Norwegian, Swedish and Danish. Students are also required to have the ability to write assignments, including the Master's thesis, in one of the above languages.

- Work load and requirements.

The programme is a full-time study with requirements to attendance and participation, and students are expected to plan accordingly.

The Board of Studies makes decisions about exceptions to the rules.

### **4.3. Restrictions on intake of students**

There is a restricted intake of students, which is set yearly and announced according to the general rules of the University. Currently the intake maximum is 30 students.

Applications received after the final deadline will be considered in the admissions committee up to 14 days after the first day of teaching of the academic year. Applications will be considered based on general requirements for qualifications for admission to Master. Furthermore, decisions by the admissions committee will take into account the number of students already enrolled on the programme, as well as a consideration of whether the applicant is capable and able to catch up with commenced courses.

For transfer students from Master's courses in other universities, university guidelines apply.

## **5. Degree title**

Upon completion of the programme and depending on their programme affiliation, graduates are entitled to use the title Master of Social Sciences (MSSc) in either: a) Social Science, b) Politics and Administration or MA in History.

Each student is given a diploma addendum outlining their personal thematic specialisation obtained through the programme.

## **6. Programme competences and outcomes**

The Master's programme as a whole shall provide the students with a range of generic and subject-specific competences. Individual courses will provide students with course-specific learning outcomes as a way of achieving these programme competences.

The purpose of the Master programme is to achieve high levels of:

- Academic professional knowledge, work ability and independency of the student and the further development of competences and qualifications from the bachelor programme.

- Competences of the student in using the terminology, theories and methods within reflexive science and the field of study.
- Competences to independently immerse oneself in problem-oriented procedures on a highly advanced level.
- Skills in obtaining a reflexive academic depth and independency.
- Qualifications to commence a research programme (Ph.D).
- Qualifications to perform specialised and complex work tasks in the private sector, the public sector or the non-profit sector.

Upon completion of the programme, the Master will be able to:

- Demonstrate broad and qualified knowledge about central and important issues within the chosen field of study based upon the most recent and recognised scientific research as well as professional skills.
- Demonstrate qualifications and competences for the purpose of problematising, analysing and producing relevant knowledge within his/her field of research and own chosen thematic.
- Work problem-oriented and interdisciplinary at a highly qualified level.
- Independently undertake work tasks on a high level, but at the same time demonstrate skills to be part of a working group, including skills to be leading such working groups.
- To undertake communication of research and research-based knowledge, to discuss these issues with peers, in public and with those directly affected.
- To undertake analytical work tasks on behalf of private, public or non-profit organisations, including offering well-founded solutions and actions to address complex challenges.

## **7. Employment and further studies**

The Master's Programme qualifies students to work at Master's level in government, the private sector or non-profit society organisations managing issues relating to the analysis of complex problematics and their possible solutions.

Besides subject specific competences, each student will have obtained individually focussed skills and qualifications which will be described in the individual diploma.

The Master's Programme will qualify students to gain access to related 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle (doctoral) programmes in Humanities and Social Sciences.

## **8. Structure and content**

### **8.1. Structure**

The Master Programme is 120 ECTS, which corresponds to full-time study over a period of two academic years. The programme is structured into four semesters, each semester corresponding to 30 ECTS points. Each course description contains a purpose, content and work method(s), learning outcomes and examination format according to the regulations for the University of the Faroe Islands.

The Master's thesis (30 ECTS) is the final element in the programme, and thus, students normally should have passed all other required courses (90 ECTS points), prior to commencing the thesis. However, students may in certain circumstances be permitted to commence their Master's thesis if they hold 80 ECTS. The Programme Director makes a concrete assessment in each individual case. A student cannot enrol for his/her final master thesis exam before all other required exams have been passed.

The overall structure of the two-year Master's programme is as follows:

1. Semester 30 ECTS total	Methodology 10 ECTS	Subject course Social Science 10 ECTS	Subject course History 10 ECTS	Subject course Politics and Administration 10 ECTS	Master project 10 ECTS
2. Semester 30 ECTS total	Optional courses at overseas university or the University of the Faroe Islands 30 ECTS				
3. Semester 30 ECTS total	Academic Practice Stay 25 ECTS			Advanced methodology 5 ECTS	
4. Semester 30 ECTS total	Master Thesis 30 ECTS				

It should be noted that in the first semester students attend one of the three subject courses, depending on which subject they are enrolled in. Therefore, semester one totals 30 ECTS as is the case for semester two, three and four. All courses are core, however, optional courses at a university home or abroad entail an active choice on part of the student, . Each semester is explained in greater detail below.

## 8.2. Content

### 8.2.1. Focus of the Master's Programme

The Master Programme is constructed as a stepwise and progressive whole, which emphasises both the professional academic community and individual specialisation.

Besides course activities, the first semester, in addition to regular coursework, is focused on a reflexive epistemology through collective forms of learning, particularly through project work. The second semester is the semester wherein the student advances his/her competences and skills either at the University of the Faroes or at a university abroad.. The third semester is mainly concentrated around "practice learning" or a "phronetikum" in which the purpose is for the student to write an academic report based on a practically relevant and complex problematic in cooperation with an organisation or company. In the fourth semester, students write their Master thesis.

Students have the right to guidance to support their completion of projects and other work tasks. Students are required to actively participate in developing the professional community of practice.



Details about the Master programme, its subjects, learning practices and learning outcomes and time frames are provided in course descriptions and the study guide on the University homepage.

### 8.2.2. First semester

The first semester consists of three obligatory modules: Methodology course (10 ECTS), subject specific courses (10 ECTS) and a Master Project (10 ECTS).

The programme commences with a methodology course (10 ECTS) and introduces the student to the ontological-epistemological basis of a critical, contextual and practice oriented science, which is the realm of reflexive science. The course addresses what good science is, including the role of interdisciplinarity and problem-based work in this and methodological implications.

The subject specific courses (10 ECTS) provide the student with extended knowledge of theories and methods within their respective subject area. All subject specific courses have a common thematic throughout the course process, which are *small states and islands*. The common thematic makes it possible to interpret the same thematic from different disciplinary fields, which is done interactively among students by discussions and seminars that cross the subject fields. Students can only by written request, and in due time, be allowed to take more than one subject specific course within the same semester.

One third of the semester is devoted to the Master Project (10 ECTS), which basically follows the academic guidelines of problem-oriented work. Its purpose is to help students develop a relatively consistent academic analysis, that is, a written product based on historically/societally relevant problematics, which is empirically oriented and conceptually and theoretically informed.

Purpose, content, outcomes and practicalities of the modules are described in detail in course descriptions.

### 8.2.3. Second semester

In this semester the student receives specialised knowledge within his/her chosen themes either at a foreign academic institution or at the University of the Faroe Islands. Specialised knowledge and competences may be theoretical; may be in methods, technological skills or a combination of these. The important thing is, that each student, within the reflexive scientific framework, progresses in his/her career path based on the highest academic standards.

The optional courses are to be oriented towards courses/themes within the student's field of study and at the same time stimulate and strengthen the personal thematic, which the students intend to acquire specialised competences around. To ensure the necessary academic progression and skills, the student's plan for his/her second semester is to be approved by the Programme Director in due time.

The second semester comprises 30 ECTS.

#### **8.2.4. Third semester**

This semester has two objectives. First, the student is expected to complete an academic practice stay at a relevant institution or organisation (25 ECTS). Secondly, the student writes up a methodological report (Advanced Methodology) accounting for 5 ECTS.

A relevant practice stay means that the student, the Programme Director and the institution/organisation in question agree upon an assignment, which can be academically carried out within the planned time and scope. The main purpose of the practice stay is that the student extends his/her abilities to work with complex societal/historical issues, especially by strengthening his/her analytical and problem-oriented skills and competences. The purpose is also to extend the qualifications within the student's chosen field of interest, and therefore, it is expected that the choice of institution/organisation operates within that particular field of interest ). Furthermore, the intention is to link theoretical perspectives to practical problematics in the surrounding community of the university (university-society linkage).

The agreement between the student and the workplace must be approved by the Programme Director with respect to the academic standards of the practice stay. Therefore, the agreement needs to take account of the student having assignments with his/her academic community during the stay (normally 1 day a week), and that the student must be permitted enough time to write an academic report. Also, it is important that the student has a contact person at the workplace and access to necessary facilities (desk etc.). Furthermore, for the sake of having a stay in an organisational work environment, the organisation must have a minimum of 3 full-time employees.

The Programme Director will draw up guidelines for the re-examination of failed practice stays or a failed practice report, however, these guidelines must satisfy the general rules of the university for re-examinations.

The Academic Practice Module is followed by a 5 ECTS module in Advanced Methodology. The student writes up a methodological essay, supported by thematic seminars. The essay shall be oriented towards the Master thesis. The idea is, within the student's chosen field of study and personal thematic, to produce reflections about the scientific challenges with regard to the coming Master thesis. More specifically the paper should include reflections about and abilities to pinpoint problematics and types of problematics within a chosen thematic, summarise theoretical knowledge in order to identify relevant problematics and relate these towards a contextual and problem-driven academic practice.

Purpose, content, outcomes and practicalities of the modules are described in detail in course descriptions.

#### **8.2.5. Fourth semester**

The fourth semester is focused on the writing up of the Master thesis and will be supported by thesis seminars. The Programme Director will specify the details of the seminars, but the idea is to provide basic support on how to write a Master thesis within the Master framework. Additionally, the student (or group of students) will be appointed a supervisor. The thesis equals 30 ECTS points.

The topic of the Master thesis must be approved by the Programme Director. This is done by a short thesis proposal from the student(s) (1.5-3 pages), which outlines the basic idea, theory and methods, as well as work plan for the course of the thesis. If the Advanced Methodology essay has an adequate proposal about the planned Master thesis work, the student can request that this proposal replaces the Master thesis proposal.

The Programme Director must approve the research theme of the Master thesis, and the research question must be approved by the thesis supervisor.

The Master's thesis can be done individually or by groups of two or three students. Through their work on the thesis, the student(s) must demonstrate proficiency in making use of the programme's methodologies and theories in relation to an independent analysis of an issue relevant to his/her chosen thematic.

The thesis is prescribed to 30 ECTS credits.

The literature is expected to reflect primary as well as secondary contributions to the illumination of the chosen problematic.

To be enrolled on the Master thesis course and be allocated a supervisor, students must lack no more than 10 ECTS of the overall Master programme.

The thesis and the table of content must contain a consistent and complete academically authorised bibliography (Harvard, Chicago, etc.).

The length of the thesis and the abstract (excluding the front page, table of content, figures, tables, footnotes, bibliography, and appendices) should not exceed:

- For one student: 31.500 words.
- For two students: 40.500 words.
- For three students: 50.000 words.

The thesis must include:

- Front page including title (plus title in English if the thesis is written in another language), name of student(s), student registration number(s), name of supervisor, date of thesis submission, and a word count.
- An abstract in English (maximum 350 words).
- A table of content.
- A bibliography.

The thesis layout should have:

- Top, bottom, and side margins of at least 2.5 cm.
- Line distance of at least 1.5 cm.
- Page numbers.

Appendices may be included in print and/or available online.

Failure to comply with any of these standard basic requirements may result in failure or a rejection of the submitted thesis.

#### **8.2.5.1. Master thesis seminar**

To support the thesis work, annual thesis seminars are offered in the spring semester.

The seminar provides students with general knowledge and guidance in the formulation of research questions, research objectives, the development and application of research design, use of methodology, writing assignments, structuring of the written product and the management workflow, as well as other relevant elements. An important element of the thesis seminar is the students' own active participation, and students are required to present their own work and give critical feedback to the work of others.

#### **8.2.5.2. Submission of Master thesis**

The Programme Director will determine the submission deadline for the Master thesis. Students may request an extension of a maximum of three months. Students requesting an extension must contact the Programme Director in writing no later than one month prior to submission deadline. Extensions can be granted only once for each student. A subsequent failure to submit the thesis will result in the thesis being registered as a failed attempt.

### **9. Other requirements**

Successful completion of the Master programme requires that all graded exams at the University of the Faroe Islands are passed with a score of at least 02 (on the 7-point marking scale), while those assessed on a "pass/fail" basis must be passed. All exams from partner universities must be passed according to partners' criteria.

The 7-point marking scale is as follows 12, 10, 7, 4, 02, 00, -3 (corresponding to A, B, C, D, E, F, Fx). 12 is the highest mark.

12 is given for an excellent performance displaying a high level of command of all aspects of the relevant material, with no or only a few minor weaknesses.

10 is given for a very good performance displaying a high level of command of most aspects of the relevant material, with only minor weaknesses.

7 is given for a good performance displaying good command of the relevant material but also some weaknesses.

4 is given for a fair performance displaying some command of the relevant material but also some major weaknesses.

02 is given for a performance meeting only the minimum requirements for acceptance.

00 is given for a performance which does not meet the minimum requirements for acceptance

-3 is given for a performance which is unacceptable in all respects.

## 9.1. Exams

The objective of the examination is to assess whether, and to what extent, the student's qualifications comply with the stated objectives, learning outcomes and other academic requirements of each course.

An examination has been successfully completed when the assessment "Pass" or the grade 02 or higher is awarded. Successfully completed courses and exams cannot be resat.

Examinations are either internal or external. Internal examinations are assessed solely by the internal examiner(s) at the university. External examinations are assessed by the internal examiner(s) and an appointed external examiner.

Exams are either oral, based on written assignments or as a combination of these two.

Oral exams can be executed in groups, but grading is always individual.

Oral exams usually take the form of a discussion between the student and examiner(s). External examiners have the right to participate in the discussion on an equal footing with internal examiner(s). There may be up to two internal examiners present.

Written exam assignments can be written individually or in groups.

Individual course descriptions outline specific examination forms for each course.

Assignments will always be assessed by at least two examiners (two internal or one internal and one external).

For withdrawal from classes and exams; make-up exams and resits; exam attempts; special examination conditions; examination cheating; and examination appeals; the university's general rules and guidelines apply (<https://setur.fo/setrid/um-setrid/logir-og-reglugerdir/>).

## 9.2. Signing up for courses

Students are signed up for core courses automatically. However, for elective courses, including courses abroad students must sign up through the Programme Administrator.

All courses must be approved by the Programme Director. Information about how to sign up is available on the university webpage.

Content and availability of all courses and projects are further described on the programme webpage.

## 10. Transfers

Students may apply for transfer of credits passed at other universities. All transfer applications must be submitted to the Study Board via the Programme Director. Applications should include full course description(s) and literature lists with page count.

See also the university webpage or consult the departmental secretariat.

## **11. Complaints and examination appeals**

Information about rules and procedures regarding complaints and examination appeals is available on the university webpage. Please also refer to [https://www.setur.fo/media/1847/kunnger85\\_skiftisreglur\\_lesandi\\_byrja\\_adrenn\\_2008\\_og\\_alment\\_provskeid\\_foeroyskt.pdf](https://www.setur.fo/media/1847/kunnger85_skiftisreglur_lesandi_byrja_adrenn_2008_og_alment_provskeid_foeroyskt.pdf), chapter 8, §§ 47-51. Complaints should always be in writing and may be in English, Danish or Faroese.

## **12. Programme amendment**

The programme may be amended, and the Programme Director should endeavour for potential changes to come into effect at the beginning of the academic year. Amendments may be proposed by the Programme Director and the Study Board and approved by the Study Board. Notification about amendments that tighten the admission requirements for the programme will be published on the relevant webpages at least three months before the application deadline. If amendments are made to this programme, an interim arrangement may be added if necessary, to allow students to complete their Master Programme according to the amended programme.

## **13. Other regulations**

For all other matters and regulations, e.g. regarding change of programme, withdrawal of enrolment, leave of absence, cheating and ethical code, the university rules and guidelines apply.