



## FACULTY OF EDUCATION

# Education for Sustainable Development, Master's Programme, 120 credits

Utbildning för hållbar utveckling, masterprogram, 120 högskolepoäng

Programme code: S2ESD

*Second cycle / Avancerad nivå*

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## 1. Confirmation

This programme syllabus was confirmed by the Faculty Board of Education on 14-09-2017 (G 2014/299) and was last revised on 31-01-2022 (GU 2021/3514) to be valid from 29-08-2022, Autumn semester 2022.

*Responsible Department/Equivalent:* Department of Pedagogical, Curricular and Professional Studies

***Participating Departments:***

Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences

Department of Education and Special Education

School of Global Studies

The department of Technology Management and Economics, Chalmers University of Technology.

## 2. Purpose

The Master's Programme (120 credits) in Education for Sustainable Development is a second-cycle programme, which implies that it deepens and develops the students' knowledge in relation to education at first-cycle level. The programme aims to give the students the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills to systematically study education for sustainable development on a scientific basis. Furthermore, the programme aims to develop the students' ability to critically reflect upon sustainable development in an educational context and to strengthen their abilities to develop, design and evaluate educational initiatives that can contribute to sustainable development. Sustainable development is a complex concept which requires integration of different perspectives (e.g. ecological, economic, social and ethical), geographic levels (local, regional, global) and time dimensions (past, present, future), as well as their educational/didactic implications. Within the framework of the Master's Programme, questions from various

disciplinary and interdisciplinary starting points in relation to both formal and informal educational contexts are explored and possibilities and challenges for the educational practice are discussed and problematised. Within the programme, power relations and political, economic and ideological structures, as well as norms and values that find expression in our relationship to the surrounding world, are also problematised.

### 3. Entry requirements

For admission to the programme, a Bachelor's Degree of 180 credits is required, or a professional qualification specialising in the school system of at least 180 credits and an individual degree project/master's thesis of 15 credits within or outside the degree.

Applicants must also prove their knowledge of English: English 6/English B from Swedish Upper Secondary School or the equivalent level of an internationally recognized test for example TOEFL, IELTS.

Other entry requirements are documented in each syllabus.

### 4. Higher education qualification and main field of study

This programme leads to a Degree of Master of Science (120 credits) with a major in Education and Sustainability (Filosofie masterexamen med huvudområdet Utbildning och hållbar utveckling).

A student who has passed the degree programme with an approved result can apply for a degree certificate. For a Master's Degree (120 credits) in Education and Sustainable Development, a passing grade on the courses in the programme of 120 credits is required.

Education and Sustainable Development is a trans-disciplinary field with a foundation in educational science. Theoretical starting points are taken from the social sciences, from scientific and humanistic environmental research, and from subject didactics, pedagogy and pedagogical work. In the main field of study Education and Sustainable Development, pedagogical and didactic dimensions of scientific concepts and perspectives, relating to existing and altered living conditions of people and species, are studied and problematised. Further, activities that aim to develop and spread knowledge for handling complex global and local challenges with regard to sustainable development are analysed. In addition, learning processes and development of skills in relation to sustainable development are studied.

### 5. Outcomes

#### General outcomes for Degree of Master (120 credits)

##### *Knowledge and understanding*

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including both broad knowledge of the field and a considerable degree of specialised knowledge in certain areas of the field as well as insight into current research and development work, and
- demonstrate specialised methodological knowledge in the main field of study.

***Competence and skills***

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to critically and systematically integrate knowledge and analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations even with limited information
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues critically, autonomously and creatively as well as to plan and, using appropriate methods, undertake advanced tasks within predetermined time frames and so contribute to the formation of knowledge as well as the ability to evaluate this work
- demonstrate the ability in speech and writing both nationally and internationally to clearly report and discuss his or her conclusions and the knowledge and arguments on which they are based in dialogue with different audiences, and
- demonstrate the skills required for participation in research and development work or autonomous employment in some other qualified capacity.

***Judgement and approach***

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the main field of study informed by relevant disciplinary, social and ethical issues and also to demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work
- demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and
- demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for his or her ongoing learning.

**Local outcomes*****Knowledge and understanding***

- Show knowledge and understanding in the main field of study Education and Sustainable Development, including advanced and current expertise in a delimited part of the field.

***Competence and skills***

- Demonstrate ability to critically review and analyse perspectives in educational science on complex phenomena and processes of change within sustainable development.
- Demonstrate ability to apply a scientific approach in relation to theoretical, practical and policy-related aspects of education for sustainable development.

***Judgement and approach***

- Demonstrate ability to critically and independently formulate research questions that are of relevance to education for sustainable development, and to choose appropriate methods for research-based analysis of these questions.
- Demonstrate understanding of principles and approaches of research ethics, as well as an ability to make assessments regarding research ethics.

## Sustainability labelling

The programme is sustainability-focused, which means that at least one of the outcomes clearly shows that the programme content meets at least one of the University of Gothenburg's confirmed sustainability criteria. The content also constitutes the programme's main focus.

## 6. Content and structure

The Master's Programme (120 credits) in Education for Sustainable Development has a wide scope within the theory of science that is made possible through cross-faculty cooperation between departments at the University of Gothenburg and Chalmers University of Technology. The students are trained to navigate between different scientific paradigms and debates of relevance to education for sustainable development; knowledge that is consolidated and deepened through the preparatory courses in research during the programme's final years (ESD501-700). The courses are research-related and, where applicable, related to ongoing research projects.

The courses in the programme highlight different perspectives on education for sustainable development where integrated dimensions of ecological, economic, social and ethical questions in education for sustainable development are central. Attitudes, norms and values as well as visions of an ecologically, economically, socially and ethically sustainable society are addressed in the courses, through studies of research results, international reports, discussions and debates. The participants' different experiences and cultural backgrounds are seen as an important resource in the programme and are integrated in the courses through, for example, assignments where the participants compare local conditions for implementation of global decisions regarding education for sustainable development.

The programme comprises two years of full-time studies (120 credits). The programme concludes with an individual assignment in the form of a Master's Thesis (30 credits). The courses and the course of study can be seen in the appendix.

The courses build on each other with a clear progression. The theoretical basis for the main field of study is introduced at the start of the programme and is thereafter developed gradually through the thematic courses ESD200-400, as is the knowledge of research methodology. The explicitly research-oriented courses ESD501-601 are directly preparatory for the Master's Thesis (ESD700).

The course Education for Sustainable Development- an introduction (ESD101, 15 credits) contains an introduction to the programme and the main field of study, an overview of the structure of the programme as well as a first introduction to writing the Master's Thesis (ESD700). Thereafter the course gives a broad introduction to education for sustainable development as a field of study, as a field of policy and as a research domain. Relationships between social, economic, and environmental aspects relating to sustainable development are problematised, and central concepts in both sustainable development and education for sustainable development are highlighted from a historical and present-day perspective. Within the framework of this introductory course, educational traditions within education for sustainable development are also reviewed and discussed. In the courses Environment, Nature and Sustainable Development in an Educational Perspective (ESD200, 15 credits), Citizenship, Social values and Ethics in Sustainability Education (ESD300, 15 credits) and Economy, Global Inequality and Pathways to Sustainability (ESD400, 15 credits), different aspects of education

for sustainable development are developed and problematised. In the course **Theory and Research in ESD** (ESD501, 15 credits), different ontological and epistemic positions in education for sustainable development will be addressed, as well as an analysis of the research field. Different research methods in relation to education for sustainable development constitute central parts in the course **Research Methods in ESD** (ESD601, 15 credits). The final course Degree Project for Master in Education and Sustainability (ESD700, 30 credits) aims to give the students an opportunity to further specialise in the main field of study "Education for Sustainable Development" as well as carry out independent research studies on a scientific basis.

The courses are part of a course of study where the achieved aims of the previous course constitute the basis for the following course, which implies that the courses cannot be taken in any other order than the one stated in the course of study.

The teaching in all the courses is conducted online and a web-based learning platform is used. Shorter lectures with researchers are distributed to the participants via the web-based learning platform. Recorded interviews and debates are another type of material that are made accessible on the web-based learning platform with the purpose of introducing and discussing different issues regarding education for sustainable development. Links to recorded video clips from the internet are used as a basis for inspiration and discussion. The students are expected to participate in discussion forums and actively make their own contributions in the form of texts, images and films. Literature seminars and discussions are organised via the web-based learning platform, both between the students and between the students and the teachers. The students are sometimes divided into groups so as to have the chance to conduct discussions in smaller units, both between themselves and with the teachers. Tutoring constitutes a particularly important part of the final course as the students work with their master's theses.

The courses in the programme are examined in several different ways. The design of the examinations gives the students the chance to test and review their own knowledge, skills and values in several ways in relation to programme and course objectives.

Please also see the appendix. Courses and Study path S2ESD.

## 7. Guaranteed admission

Students who have been admitted to the programme and are following it at the normal rate of study (full-time) are guaranteed admission to the courses in the programme.

## 8. Other information

Transfer of credits. Possible transfer of credits is decided by each department.

The study programme will be followed up and evaluated in accordance with the applicable *Policy för kvalitetssäkring och kvalitetsutveckling av utbildning vid Göteborgs universitet* (Policy for the Quality assurance and Quality Development of Education at the University of Gothenburg). Course evaluations are carried out in connection with each course. These act as guidance for the ongoing courses and for the development of future courses. In connection with the final master's thesis, students are given the opportunity to evaluate the entire program and the results are discussed with the students. The result and possible changes in the program's design should be communicated to both the students who completed the evaluation and to the

students who will start the program.

The language of instruction is English.

## Education for Sustainable Development, Master's Programme (S2ESD)

### Courses and study path

Semester	Course code	Course title	Coverage
1 (Autumn)	ESD101	Education for Sustainable Development - an introduction	15 hec
1 (Autumn)	ESD200	Environment, nature and sustainable development in an educational perspective	15 hec
2 (Spring)	ESD300	Citizenship, social values and ethics in sustainability education	15 hec
2 (Spring)	ESD400	Economy, Global Inequality and Pathways to Sustainability	15 hec
3 (Autumn)	ESD501	Theory and Research in ESD	15 hec
3 (Autumn)	ESD601	Research Methods in ESD	15 hec
4 (Spring)	ESD700	Degree Project for Master in Education and Sustainability	30 hec