

## 6. Course syllabus and course dates

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### 6.1 Starting points

#### *Policy*

In order to give students good conditions to carry out their studies with good results, it is important to provide them with clear information early on.

#### *SLU rules*

In order to carry out a course, the following is required:

- an approved course syllabus – see section 6.2 Course syllabus
- an approved course date – see section 6.4 Course dates and
- planned implementation – see chapter 7. Before and when a course starts.

#### *Who is responsible for what?*

The department in question is responsible to implement a course. There may be one or more departments that are jointly responsible to implement a course.

### 6.2 Course syllabus

#### *Policy*

It is important to have joint timeframes for courses (start and end dates). This enables students to choose courses more freely and to jointly study various courses.

#### *National regulations*

“A course shall have a course syllabus.”<sup>1</sup>

#### *SLU rules*

SLU’s rules are based on the rules stipulated in the Higher Education Ordinance and SUHF recommendations. This means that each course syllabus at SLU must include the following:

- course code
- course title
- credits
- course type
- subjects

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<sup>1</sup> Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100) Chapter 6, Section 14–15.

- educational level
- specialisation
- grading scale
- language
- entry requirements
- objectives
- content
- examination format and requirements to pass a course
- possible transitional provisions
- other information<sup>2</sup>
- responsible department and any jointly responsible departments.

These aspects are described further below.

Course codes are generated by Slukurs. The course title should relate to the content.

#### *Credits*

The scope of the course must be listed in credits. A course normally comprises 15 credits and is taught full-time for a period (i.e. half a semester). If justified, two courses of 7.5 credits can be offered for a period. See section [2.4 Academic year and semester dates](#).

Summer courses and freestanding courses not taught at full-time can have different scopes. The Board of Education (UN) can grant exemptions from the joint timeframes for courses within individual programmes if there is reason to do so.<sup>3</sup> There are specific rules for independent projects. See chapter [9. Independent project \(degree project\)](#).

#### *Subjects*

Subject classification depends on the course content. [Annex 3: First cycle and second cycle subjects at SLU](#). It includes a list of subjects and main fields of study.

At SLU, a course can be classified into one or two subjects (double classification). However, independent projects (degree projects) can only be classified into one subject.

#### *Educational level*

SLU has the following level classification:

- access course or programme
- first-cycle level
- second-cycle level
- third-cycle level (*not included in the handbook*).

#### *Specialisation*

The progressive specialisation of the course within the main field of study for general qualifications should be indicated using the codes recommended by SUHF (G1N, G1F, G2F, G2E, A1N, A1F, A1E, A2E, GXX, AXX – see the instructions for course syllabuses). A single course can only be available at one level and include one specialisation.

#### *Grading scale*

See section [6.3 grading system](#). In addition, the following standard text is automatically displayed in Slukurs:

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<sup>2</sup> Not formally a part of the course syllabus, but still included.

<sup>3</sup> Currently, the Equine Science programme and Veterinary Medicine programme are exempted.

“The various grade requirements for a course are listed in the grading criteria which must be made available when the course starts at the latest.”

### *Language*

The course language can either be Swedish or English.

- In order to study first-cycle courses, the general entry requirements state that the student must understand both Swedish and English. This means that those courses may include content in English even though the course language is Swedish.
- There are no language requirements for second-cycle courses unless they are stated as specific entry requirements. This means that second-cycle courses taught in English cannot have Swedish content unless it is listed as an entry requirement.
- Unless the course syllabus states otherwise, exams are held in the course language.

### *Entry requirements*

Specific entry requirements must be listed, and the following applies:

- “Any specific entry requirements imposed shall be totally essential for a student to be able to benefit from the course or study programme.”<sup>4</sup>
- To be admitted to a second-cycle course, the student must have obtained at least 120 credits at first-cycle level.
- For courses at second-cycle level taught in English, the entry requirements must correspond to English 6 taught at upper-secondary school. These requirements are met by students with a Bachelor’s degree (180 credits) from a Swedish higher education institution or 120 credits of completed studies at SLU.
- First-cycle courses taught entirely in English are exempted from the entry requirement concerning Swedish. This must then be listed in the course syllabus.

### *Objectives*

Course objectives must:

- describe the intended learning outcomes (see the instructions for course syllabuses);
- clarify both subject and general expertise;
- be formulated in regard to course level, specialisation and prior knowledge and be written in bullet point form;
- contribute to the overall objectives listed in each programme syllabus if the course is included in one or several degree programmes;
- be included when assessing student performance.

The content must include a short description of both the subject content and course implementation.

### *Examination format and requirements to pass a course*

The forms for assessing student performance concern how to carry out examinations and what is required to pass a course. If the course contains compulsory elements, this must be indicated.

In addition, the following standard text is automatically displayed in Slukurs:

- “If the student fails a test, the examiner may give the student a supplementary assignment, provided this is possible and there is reason to do so.
- If the student has been granted special educational support because of a disability, the examiner has the right to offer the student an adapted test, or provide an alternative assessment.
- If changes are made to this course syllabus, or if the course is closed, SLU shall decide on transitional rules for examination of students admitted under this syllabus but who have not yet passed the course.

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<sup>4</sup> Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100) Chapter 7, Section 8.

- For the examination of a degree project (independent project), the examiner may also allow the student to add supplemental information after the deadline. For more information, see the educational planning and administration handbook.”

#### *Transitional provisions*

Transitional provisions must be listed:

- when a course is altered in a way that affects examination formats and requirements to pass a course, and
- when a course is cancelled.

#### *Other information*

Any other regulations not covered in other parts of the course syllabus must be stated if necessary. In addition, the following standard text is displayed in Slukurs:

- “The right to take part in teaching and/or supervision only applies to the course date which the student has been admitted to and registered on.
- If there are special reasons, the student may take part in course components that require compulsory attendance at a later date. For more information, see the educational planning and administration handbook.”

The department coordinating the course, and any other jointly responsible departments, must be listed.

#### *Miscellaneous information*

If the course is included in one or several degree programmes, this connection must be included, but it is not part of the actual course syllabus. It should also say whether the course is offered as a freestanding course.

If another course takes the place of, is replaced with or overlaps with the course in question, this information must also be included.

#### *Who is responsible for what?*

The responsible department documents the course syllabus in both Swedish and English in Slukurs.

If cooperation stretches over faculties, the participating parties must be consulted in the manner agreed upon by the programme boards in question.

The programme board approves<sup>5</sup> course syllabuses and any programme connections. The course syllabus must include the decision date and decision-making body as well as when the course syllabus begins to apply.

*The programme director of studies* decides<sup>6</sup> when to revise course syllabuses. When a course syllabus is revised, a new version with the same course code is created. The following remains unchanged:

- course code
- course title
- number of credits
- subject
- level and specialisation
- grading scale.

The faculty office must submit the following for archiving:

- course syllabus as an annex to a protocol
- programme board protocol

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<sup>5</sup> The SLU Board’s delegation of authority.

<sup>6</sup> The vice-chancellor’s delegation of authority.

- course syllabus revision.

### *Instructions*

There are instructions on how to write uniform course syllabuses. See [Links](#).

The course syllabus must be available on the SLU web and [universityadmissions.se](http://universityadmissions.se) as soon as possible – when course applications are open at the latest. SLU applies joint time frames for planning and decisions on the offered course and programmes. See [2: Annual cycle for course and programme planning](#).

### *Links*

[Instructions for course syllabuses](#)

[Course syllabus template](#) (Word)

[Antagningsordning för tillträde till utbildning på grundnivå och avancerad nivå](#) (admission regulations for first- and second-cycle education – only in Swedish)

[Lokal examensordning – regler för examina på grundnivå och avancerad nivå vid SLU](#) (SLU's examination procedures for first cycle and second cycle level – only in Swedish). Includes teaching and research duties for SLU's main fields of study

## 6.3 Grading system

### *National regulations*

“Unless otherwise provided by the higher education institution, a grade shall be awarded on completion of a course. The higher education institution may determine which grading system is to be used.”<sup>7</sup>

### *SLU rules*

#### *Grading scales*

SLU uses a four-point criterion-referenced grading scale:

- 5 (pass with special distinction)
- 4 (pass with credit)
- 3 (pass)
- U (fail)

If a decision has been made to exempt a certain course module (module/test) or a certain course or programme, a two-point criterion-referenced grading scale is used:

- G (pass)
- U (fail)

SLU follows SUHF recommendations regarding the application of the ECTS Grading Table in the following way:

- compiling the percentage allocation of pass grades per grade for each course;
- listing the division of pass grades per grade for each completed course in the Transcript of Records, in connection with information on the used grading system;
- including information on the division of grades from when the course was established with the current course code until the student completed the course. If the course has been carried

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<sup>7</sup> Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100) Chapter 6, Section 18.

out a minimum of two times, Ladok automatically calculates the division of grades. If a student requests it, a separate certificate is issued for new courses.

#### *Course exceptions*

Exceptions from the four-point grading scale can for e.g. be made for introductory, short courses and practical skill training courses, excursions, etc. when assessment is primarily based on student participation.

The amount of courses with allowed exceptions:

- Up to 25 per cent of courses within a first-cycle programme, including first-cycle courses within long professional programmes (5 years) may be assessed in accordance with the two-point scale. However, this does not include independent projects.
- Up to 10 per cent of courses within a second-cycle programme, including second-cycle courses within long professional programmes (5 years) may be assessed in accordance with the two-point scale. However, this does not include independent projects.

#### *Course module exceptions*

The grading scale for course modules (previous modules or tests) may differ from the scale that applies for the course in general. See section [6.6 Course modules](#).

#### *Programmes exceptions*

Valid reasons to be exempted from the four-point grading scale that applies for all courses within a degree programme is that there is no need for grading scales. The reasons are:

- to facilitate student mobility between programmes and sites;
- make selections within programmes;
- attract foreign students;
- strengthen student employability;
- facilitate cooperation with other education providers and joint studies with other programmes, and/or
- the programme leads to a qualification that includes a certification.

The following degree programmes are currently exempted from the four-point grading scale:

- the Veterinary Nursing programme<sup>8</sup>, 180 credits
- the Veterinary Medicine programme<sup>9</sup>, 330 credits

#### *Who is responsible for what?*

- The Board of Education decides if a programme will be exempted from the four-point grading scale.
- The programme board decides if a course will be exempted from the four-point grading scale.
- The examiner decides on the grading scale for a course module (previously module or test) for individual courses.
- At a student's request, the Division of Educational Affairs issues a separate certificate on the division of grades for new courses.

## 6.4 Course dates

#### *Important concepts*

A *course date* is the start and end date for a course.

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<sup>8</sup> Decision by the Board of Education, Section 77/17.

<sup>9</sup> Decision by the Board of Education, Section 59/15.

Several course dates in an academic year or for an entire degree programme are described in a *course schedule*. Example:

	<i>Period I</i>	<i>Period II</i>	<i>Period III</i>		<i>Period IV</i>
1	Course $\alpha$ , 15 credits	Course $\beta$ , 15 credits	Course $\eta$ , credits	Course $\theta$ , credits	Course $\delta$ , 15 credits
2	Course $\gamma$ , 15 credits	Course $\zeta$ , 15 credits	Independent project, 30 credits		

### *Policy*

The basic idea is that courses are open to freestanding students. It is important that SLU includes long-term planning of its range of courses.

Programme courses can be exempted if it is difficult or unsuitable to offer the course in question to freestanding students, e.g. capacity limitations, content and/or entry requirements.

Courses taught in English may be exempted from the UHR's English web, if it is difficult or unsuitable to offer the course to freestanding, international students. It is important to make a conscious choice of which courses will be advertised on the English web.

### *SLU rules*

Information regarding which courses will start in the coming academic year must be available on the SLU web and [antagning.se](http://antagning.se) no later than when the admission period for the autumn semester begins. However, summer courses may be added later.

A course should be advertised as soon as possible in order to provide information before each admission period. At this time, both the course syllabus and course date must be approved. See [Annex 2: Annual cycle for course and programme planning](#).

### *Who is responsible for what?*

The programme board decides on:

- the course dates for the coming academic year
- which programme courses will be open to freestanding students and
- which courses taught in English that will be exempted from UHR's English web.

A course may be included in several degree programmes and therefore affect different programme boards. However, there must always be a responsible programme board for each course. This must be documented in Slukurs.

If cooperation stretches over faculties, the participating parties must be consulted in the manner agreed upon by the programme boards in question.

SLU applies joint timeframes for planning and decisions on the offered course and programmes. See [2: Annual cycle for course and programme planning](#).

### *Links*

[First-cycle and second-cycle courses](#)

## 6.5 Cancellation of a course

### *Important concepts*

A *course date* is the start and end date for a course.

### *Policy*

It is important for the students to have access to a predictable set of offered courses. Therefore, programme boards must work not to cancel course dates.

### *SLU rules*

#### *General information*

A course date included in an established range of courses offered may only be cancelled in exceptional cases, and only if the decision can be justified.

The same decision-making body that established the range of courses offered must decide whether to cancel a course date. See section [6.4 Course dates](#). A decision to cancel a course must be made by 1 June before the autumn semester begins and by 15 November before the spring semester begins.

#### *Programme courses – compulsory*

Compulsory programme courses may not be cancelled if there are programme students who plan on taking the course at a regular rate of study. This includes students who return following granted deferment/approved leave from studies.

#### *Programme courses – elective*

An elective programme course may be cancelled if, among other things, it is expected that a maximum of 10 students will participate. In these cases, an alternative course must be offered. The alternative course must primarily correspond to the applied course in regard to entry requirements, and also contribute towards the fulfilment of the degree requirements in a corresponding manner.

#### *Freestanding courses*

Courses without a programme connection may be cancelled if it is expected that a maximum of 15 students will participate. An alternative course cannot always be offered.

#### *Cancellation of a course following an admission decision*

In exceptional cases, SLU can cancel a course after admission decisions have been sent to students, but only if one of the following requirements are met:

- None of the admitted students demand their place in the course.
- In the first selection, the admission decision states that the course may be cancelled. In those cases, this reservation must be decided by the same body that established the offered course.

#### *Who is responsible for what?*

The responsible department must carry out a compulsory programme course even if the examiner or other teacher resigns, takes sick leave or equivalent.

The programme board must ensure that there is an alternative course date that corresponds to a cancelled, elective programme course date.

#### *Instructions*

If a responsible department wishes to cancel a course date, it must submit a request to the programme board in question, which makes the decision. If a course date is cancelled, the programme board must quickly notify both the students who applied to the course and the Division of Educational Affairs.

The faculty office which supports the programme board in question must submit the decision to cancel a course date for archiving.

## 6.6 Course modules

### *Important concepts*

A *course module* is a part of a course in the form of credits. It was previously called a module or test in Ladok.

Several results notes relating to a course module can be entered in Ladok. When all results have been reported, the course module is listed as passed in Ladok.

The following examples illustrate the relationship between a course module and course results:  
KE0000 Chemistry, 15 credits.

### *Option A*

- Course module: 0001 General Chemistry, 7 credits. Includes the following result notes:
  - Examination General Chemistry
  - Laboratory session 1
  - Laboratory session 2
- Course module: 0002 Organic Chemistry, 8 credits. Includes the following result notes:
  - Examination Organic Chemistry
  - Laboratory session 3
  - Written assignment

### *Option B*

- Course module: 0001 Examination, 6 credits. Includes the following result notes:
  - Examination General Chemistry
  - Examination Organic Chemistry
- Course module: 0002 Laboratory sessions, 3 credits. Includes the following result notes:
  - Laboratory session 1
  - Laboratory session 2
  - Laboratory session 3
- Course module: 0003 Written assignment, 1 credit. Includes the following result notes:
  - Written assignment

### *Policy*

Normally, courses of 15 credits or more must include course modules.

Course module advantages:

- The student receives credits for modules they pass and subsequently student finance payments from the Swedish Board of Student Finance (CSN).
- CSN does not accept manual certificates but bases its assessment on information in Ladok.
- Registered results facilitate entry requirements checks, for example if the student has enough credits to take the next course.

### *SLU rules*

Course modules (previously called modules or tests) must be listed for each course date:

- Modules must be added in Ladok before an autumn semester starts – 31 May at the latest.

- Modules must be added in Ladok before a spring semester starts – 30 November at the latest.

*Who is responsible for what?*

The examiner decides how to divide a course into course modules. The responsible department must enter the modules in Ladok before the deadline.

*Instructions*

Course modules from previous course dates remain if no new modules are added.

SLU applies joint timeframes for planning and decisions on the offered course and programmes. See [2: Annual cycle for course and programme planning](#).