

Find out all about higher education studies at [studera.nu](http://studera.nu)



# STUDYING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Engelska/English

Högskoleverket • Luntmakargatan 13 • Box 7851, 103 99 Stockholm  
tfn 08-563 085 00 • fax 08-563 085 50 • e-post [hsv@hsv.se](mailto:hsv@hsv.se) • [www.hsv.se](http://www.hsv.se)

**ATT STUDERA PÅ HÖGSKOLAN** Engelska  
Utgiven av Högskoleverket 2011, sjätte upplagan

**GRAFISK FORM** Alexander Florencio **ILLUSTRATION** Nina von Rüdiger **ÖVERSÄTTNING** Space 360  
**TRYCK** Danagård Litho AB, Ödeshög, juni 2011 **TRYCKT PÅ MILJÖVÄNLIGT PAPPER**

## Studying in higher education

This brochure will tell you how Swedish universities and university colleges work, the kind of people who study there, what you need to do to be admitted and how you can support yourself during your studies.

People with higher education are often in great demand in the employment market. Experience of different cultures and language skills are also very valuable

because the employment market is becoming increasingly international.

Higher education is also positive for personal development. You learn how to solve problems and how to think analytically, and are given training in how to express yourself well – both orally and in writing. This is knowledge that will always be useful to you.

## Higher education is for everyone

Swedish universities and university colleges are open to everyone. However, applicants from countries outside the EU/EEA, with the exception of Switzerland, will have to pay a tuition fee. An increasingly large proportion of the population study at a higher education institution at some point in their lives. Some people go on to higher education directly after upper secondary school, while others choose to work for a while or travel abroad before they begin their studies. Most students in Sweden are between 20 and 25 years old, but many are older.

Sweden's universities and university colleges have become increasingly multicultural. Many foreign students come to Sweden on various exchange programmes. There are just as many young people with a non-Swedish background as there are young Swedish people studying at universities and university colleges in Sweden. A multicultural atmosphere is regarded as high quality in higher education and much is done to contribute to increased diversity.

## University or university college?

Sweden has some fifty university colleges and universities – from Kiruna in the north to Malmö in the south. Most of them are state-controlled. There are also about ten independent programme providers who are empowered to award degrees in various subjects. Independent means that they are not controlled by the state. Empowerment to award degrees means that they can award degrees for some of their study programmes.

Whether a higher education institution is a university or a university college does not mean that there is any difference in quality. The difference is that a university can always offer post-graduate studies to students who have completed their first degrees. However, some university colleges hold permits that allow them to offer post-graduate degrees within certain areas of research.

In this brochure, we will refer to both universities and university colleges as higher education institutions – the same regulations apply to both.

It is not possible to say whether one higher education institution is better than another. It depends on what you yourself think is important. A number of higher education institutions specialise in certain types of education, for example artistic disciplines or engineering subjects. Others offer programmes in many different fields. The quality of the education is regularly assessed by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education.

There are also private education companies that call themselves universities or university colleges, but which do not meet any academic standard. They often charge tuition fees. These institutions are not dealt with in this brochure.

On the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education's website [studera.nu](http://studera.nu) you can find addresses and contact details for all the higher education institutions in Sweden.

## Choosing a study programme

You can find information about the courses and programmes they offer on the institutions' websites. You can find addresses and links to all the higher education institutions at [studera.nu](https://studera.nu). In addition, you can order course catalogues by contacting each individual institution.

If you need help or advice when you are planning your studies, you can contact a study and careers guidance counsellor. You can find careers guidance counsellors in upper secondary schools, at Komvux, and at the higher education institutions. Public Employment Services offices can also provide information about studies.

## Courses or a programme?

All higher education consists of courses. You can either choose to combine courses into a degree yourself, or you can choose a study programme where the higher education institution has decided beforehand which courses are included. All study programmes lead to a degree.

When you take part in a study programme, you are guaranteed a place on all the included courses. If you study self-contained courses, on the other hand, you must apply to and be admitted to each individual course during your studies.

Studies can be full-time or part-time. If you cannot or do not want to move to a town or city with a higher education institution, you can choose distance learning. This means that you can study at home or at a learning centre in your local municipality. The learning centres have student and career counsellors who can give you

advice and support. You may, though, have to visit the higher education institution at times. Read more about distance learning at [studera.nu](https://studera.nu).

### How programmes and courses are graded

All courses and programmes in higher education give you a number of study credits. One full term of study gives 30 credits and a full academic year gives 60 credits. A four-year programme gives 240 credits.

### Three types of degree

When you have completed your studies, you can ask to be awarded a degree by the higher education institution at which you studied. There are three types of degree that a higher education institution can award: general, artistic and professional degrees.

There are two kinds of general degree at the basic level: University Diploma (2 years) and Bachelor's Degree (3 years). Moreover, there are two kinds of general degree at the advanced level: Degree of Master (1 year) and Degree of Master (2 years).

Programmes that provide qualification for a certain profession lead to a professional degree. Examples of such programmes are nursing, engineering, and psychology.

Visit [studera.nu](https://studera.nu) to see which degrees are available.

## Application and admission

### Eligibility

In order to study at a higher education institution, you must have some previous knowledge. All study programmes require what is known as basic eligibility. In order to meet the requirements for basic eligibility, you will need a school leaving certificate from a national or specialised upper secondary school programme. You will need a Pass grade or better for at least 2,250 upper secondary school credits, including a Pass grade or better in the core subjects Swedish (or Swedish as a second language), English and mathematics.

If you have a secondary school education from another country that qualifies you for higher education studies in your home country, then you are also eligible in Sweden, provided that you have sufficient knowledge in Swedish, English and mathematics.

You can also acquire basic eligibility through so-called 'reell kompetens', or real competence. More information about assessment of real competence can be found on each institute's website.

For most programmes, however, you need additional previous knowledge. This is called special eligibility. Special eligibility requirements differ between programmes and courses. Certain programmes, for example in artistic disciplines, also have special admission examinations.

If you do not have the basic or special eligibility required, there are a number of ways to acquire it.

Upper secondary schools, municipal adult education offices and folk high schools can give you more information.

### The National University Aptitude Test

If you satisfy eligibility requirements for a programme, the National University Aptitude Test is a good way to improve your chances of being admitted. The test is held twice a year and you can take it as many times as you wish. Your results are valid for five years. You do not have anything to lose by taking the National University Aptitude Test – you apply on the basis of both

your grades and your National University Aptitude Test results when you apply to the higher education institution. If you have several results from the National University Aptitude Test, it is your best results that are used. You can get more information and application documents from the higher education institutions and at [www.hogskoleprov.nu](http://www.hogskoleprov.nu).

Practice on interactive and old National University Aptitude Tests at [studera.nu](http://studera.nu).

### Applying for higher education

The National Agency for Services to Universities and University Colleges, VHS, and the education institutions cooperate on the admissions to courses and programmes. You apply online, at [www.antagning.se](http://www.antagning.se). If you have a protected identity, non-disclosable personal details or for other reasons are unable to apply online, you may order an application form from VHS by calling 08-613 99 00.

Everything you need to know about your higher education studies can be found at [studera.nu](http://studera.nu). Applications are made at [www.antagning.se](http://www.antagning.se). You may also contact the universities or university colleges directly and ask about their courses and programmes.

The academic year of higher education institutions is divided into two terms. The autumn term begins in August/September and ends in the middle of January and the spring term begins in the middle of January and ends in June. Students are admitted twice a year. The final date for applying is:

- 15 April for courses/programmes that begin in the autumn and
- 15 October for courses/programmes that begin in the spring.

If you wish to study during the summer, universities offer a variety of different short courses. The final date for application to summer courses is 15 March.

Everything you need to know about higher education studies can be found at [studera.nu](http://studera.nu).

# Financial support

Higher education in Sweden is free of charge for EU/EEA citizens and citizens of Switzerland. However, as a student you will still need money for food, accommodation, course literature etc. The most common way of supporting yourself during your studies is to apply for student aid from the National Board of Student Aid (CSN), [www.csn.se](http://www.csn.se). Student aid consists of two parts:

- a student grant, that you do not need to repay, and
- a student loan, that you must repay later.

You can choose to only apply for the grant, and you can also receive student aid for part-time studies.

Student aid for university studies is available for up to a maximum of 240 weeks. You can receive student aid until the year you reach the age of 54, but the right to loan money falls gradually from the day you reach the age of 45.

Your entitlement to student aid is not affected by how much money you have in the bank or how much your family earns. However, there is a limit to how much money you yourself may earn during a half calendar year while you are studying before this affects the amount of student aid you are entitled to. You do not need to provide security for your loan, but you must earn a certain number of credits to be entitled continued student aid.

Special rules apply if you are not a Swedish citizen. More information about student aid is available from CSN's website, [www.csn.se](http://www.csn.se).

## Repaying your loan

You begin repaying your loan six months after you last received student aid at the earliest. The amount you repay per year depends on how much money you have borrowed, the rate of interest and how old you are. More information about repayment is available from CSN's website, [www.csn.se](http://www.csn.se).

## Scholarships and housing allowances

In Sweden, there are not many scholarships that students in higher education can apply for, and the ones that exist are seldom sufficient to live on. Basically, students in Sweden have student aid instead of scholarships. Public libraries have more information about where to apply for scholarships. More information about scholarships can be found at [studera.nu](http://studera.nu).

Students who pay a tuition fee in Sweden can apply for scholarships at universities and university colleges. All addresses are available at [studera.nu](http://studera.nu).

If you are under 29 or have children, you can apply for a housing allowance. Read more on the Swedish Social Insurance Office's website, [www.forsakringskassan.se](http://www.forsakringskassan.se).

## Studies take time

Full-time studies often involve just as much work as a full-time job, i.e. 40 hours a week. When not in lectures, your time should be spent studying on your own.

## Student accommodation

Several different kinds of accommodation exist for students. If you have been admitted to a course or programme where you live, you can naturally choose to continue living where you currently reside. You can also rent a student apartment or a room in student halls. If you live in student halls, you will share a kitchen with other students.

You can find information on the higher education institutions' websites about each institution's rules for

renting student accommodation. Student accommodation may be provided by the institution, the Students' Union or by private housing companies.

It may be difficult to find somewhere to live so it is important to start your search early, especially if you will be studying in a large town or city. At [studera.nu](http://studera.nu) you can find the addresses to all higher education institutions in Sweden, as well as information about guaranteed accommodation.

## Employment after your studies

You can get information on different jobs and professions, employment prospects, and the education they require from a Public Employment Services office. The website of the Swedish Employment Service, [www.arbetsformedlingen.se](http://www.arbetsformedlingen.se), has a great deal of useful information about jobs, professions and education paths. On [studera.nu](http://studera.nu) you will also find employment market projections for various programme groups.

If you have completed higher education in another country, you can have it evaluated by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education can then advise

you which Swedish degree your foreign degree is equivalent to. Their assessment is important for both you and the employer when you apply for a job. In the case of professions that require official authorization, registration etc., other authorities will evaluate your qualifications. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education can give you more information.

It's easier to find a job when you have a higher education degree. Unemployment is lower among university graduates than among those without a degree.

## What is the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education?

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education is a government authority that deals with matters relating to universities and university colleges.

The Agency deals with quality inspections, supervision, follow-ups, the development of higher education, investigations and analyses, evaluations of foreign education and study information.

## Do you need more brochures?

This brochure is available in Albanian, Arabic, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, English, French, simple Swedish, Persian, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Thai and Turkish. If you

would like more copies of the brochure, visit [www.studera.nu/broschyre/](http://www.studera.nu/broschyre/). The brochures are free.



## Who to contact

**The Swedish Employment Service (Arbetsförmedlingen)**

tel: 0771-416 416, [www.arbetsformedlingen.se](http://www.arbetsformedlingen.se)

**The National Board of Student Aid (CSN)**

tel: 0771-276 000, [www.csn.se](http://www.csn.se)

**The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (Högskoleverket)**

tel: 08-563 085 00, [studera.nu](http://studera.nu)

**The Swedish Migration Board (Migrationsverket)**

tel: 0771-235 235, [www.migrationsverket.se](http://www.migrationsverket.se)

**The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education  
(Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan)**

tel: 010-209 10 00, [www.yhmyndigheten.se](http://www.yhmyndigheten.se)

**The National Agency for Services to Universities and University Colleges (VHS)**

tel: 08-725 96 00, [www.antagning.se](http://www.antagning.se)



The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education provides information on higher education studies in this and several other brochures, and on the [studera.nu](http://studera.nu) web portal. Request our materials from your study and careers guidance counsellor or order them for free on the Internet.

At [studera.nu](http://studera.nu) you will find everything you need to know about how higher education works, including information about the National University Aptitude Test, studies abroad, financial support, employment market projections. You can also compare courses.