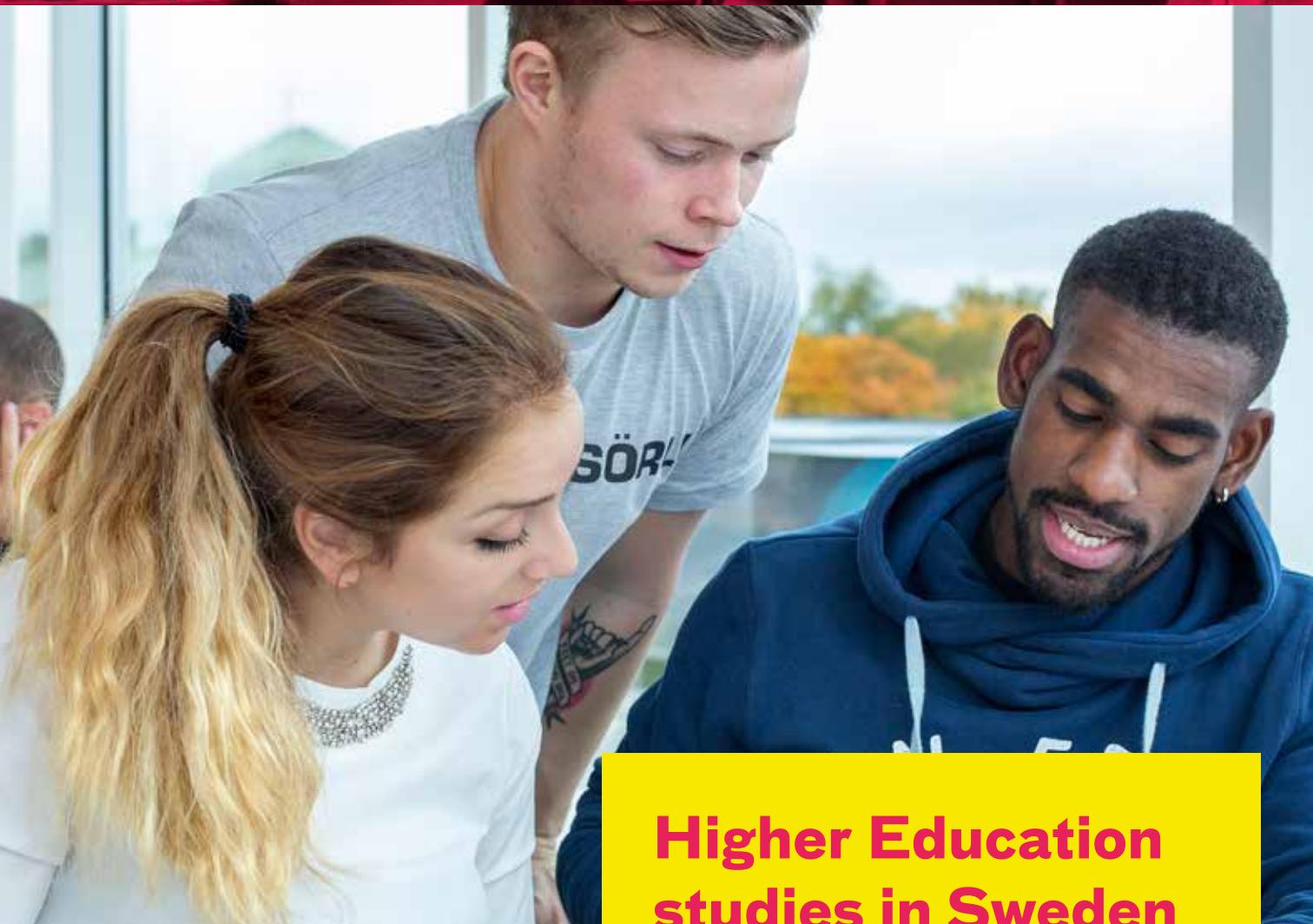


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**Higher Education
studies in Sweden**



Swedish Council for
Higher Education

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Higher Education studies in Sweden

Many people consider studying at the higher education level, from the student just finishing their upper secondary studies and wishing to continue their education, to the adult who wants to learn something new by taking some distance courses. Higher education is positive for personal development, as well as increasing a person's desirability on the job market. Students increase their intercultural and language skills, bettering their chances in today's increasingly globalised world.

University studies available for everyone

Swedish universities and university colleges are open to anyone wishing to continue their studies. An increasingly larger proportion of the population study at a university at some point in their lives. Some people go on to higher education studies directly after upper secondary school, while others choose to work first or travel abroad before starting at a university. Most students are between the ages of 20 and 25, though many are older.

Sweden's universities have become increasingly multicultural. Many foreign students come to Sweden on various exchange programmes. A multicultural atmosphere is highly regarded in higher education and much is done to contribute to increased diversity.

In this brochure, you'll find information about studying at the university level in Sweden. Here, you can find out more about universities and university colleges, courses and programmes, the application process, financial support during your studies, practical information about accommodation and employment after studies.

Swedish or English studies?

Swedish universities offer thousands of courses and programmes taught in Swedish, and in English. Students who have not yet attained the required level of Swedish (Swedish 6, the level of Swedish taught in year 3 of upper secondary school) can study courses taught in English. Swedish for Immigrants (SFI) is not a requirement for higher education studies. You can find the entire catalogue of courses taught in Swedish at **Antagning.se**. You can compare these courses by using the 'Jämför utbildning' function (only available in Swedish) at **studera.nu**. **Universityadmissions.se** has the complete catalogue of courses taught in English. Please note that courses taught in English have a minimum English requirement. You can find out more about what is required for studies at **Antagning.se**, **Universityadmissions.se**, or at the website of the university offering the course.





University or university college?

Sweden has some 50 higher education institutions – from Kiruna in the north to Malmö in the south. Most of them are public, meaning they are state-owned. There are also about ten independent (private) programme providers who are allowed to award degrees in various subjects. Universities and university colleges receive permission to award degrees for their study programmes by a Swedish government agency called the Swedish Higher Education Authority. This agency inspects higher education institutions and their programmes on a regular basis to assure quality. Only programmes that pass inspection are allowed to award degrees.

Universities and university colleges

You may have noticed that this brochure uses the terms university (universitet) and university college (högskola). Sweden has both universities and university colleges which do not differ from each other in terms of quality. The difference is that a university can always offer post-graduate (PhD) studies to students who have completed their first degrees, while university colleges cannot. However, some university colleges hold permits that allow them to offer post-graduate degrees within certain areas of research. The term higher education institution (HEI) refers to both universities and university colleges.

In this brochure, we sometimes use the term universities when referring to both universities and university colleges – please note that the same regulations apply to both.

A question that prospective students often ask is which university or university college is the best. It's impossible to answer this question as it depends on what you think is most important. Things to consider in addition to the programmes offered is the size of the university, location, atmosphere, and other factors you find important.

A number of universities and university colleges specialise in certain types of education, such as artistic disciplines or engineering subjects. Others offer programmes in many different fields. Remember that the quality of education is regularly assessed by the Swedish Higher Education Authority.

There are also private education companies operating in Sweden. They often call themselves universities and university colleges, yet do not meet any academic standard. They often charge tuition fees. The information in this brochure does not refer to these types of institutions. In addition, you won't find information about these private education companies on studera.nu, Antagning.se or Universityadmissions.se.

Courses and programmes

Your university education will be made up of units of teaching called courses. In Sweden, you can choose to take individual courses and combine them into a degree yourself, or choose a study programme where the university has decided beforehand which courses are included. All study programmes lead to a degree, whereas you must select the right individual courses in order to combine them to receive a degree.

When you are accepted to a study programme, you are guaranteed a place in all the included courses. If you study individual self-contained courses, you must have applied and be admitted to each individual course during your studies. Therefore, if you're combining courses in pursuit of a degree without belonging to a programme, there is no guarantee there will be a place available for you in each course. You can study full-time or part-time. If you cannot or do not

wish to move to a town or city with a university or university college, you can choose distance learning. This means that you can study at home or at a learning centre in your municipality. The learning centres have student and career counsellors who can give you advice and support. Some distance courses require you to attend a few meetings at the university, while others do not. You can search for distance courses with or without required meetings at the admissions websites **Universityadmissions.se** and **Antagning.se**, or compare various distance courses at **studera.nu** using 'Jämför utbildning'. This service is only offered in Swedish.

Course grading and credits

All higher education courses and programmes give you a number of study credits. One semester of full-



time studies gives 30 credits and a full academic year gives 60 credits. Programmes are often three years (180 credits) at the bachelor's level and one or two years (60 or 120 credits) at the master's level.

In order to assess a student's work and progress, examinations are given by the course instructor. Examinations can be timed and written, completed at home, or oral. Students are also required to complete and submit individual and group assignments. Labs, group work and academic papers are also often requirements of various courses.

Students are graded based on the result of their work. You have the right to repeat examinations, but not more than 5 times. In some cases, students may appeal the grade they receive on an examination. More information about examinations and grading can be found at studera.nu.

Types of degrees

When you have completed your studies, you can ask to be awarded a degree by the university or university college where you studied. There are three types of degrees that can be awarded: general, artistic and professional.

There are two kinds of general degrees at the undergraduate (first cycle) level: University Diploma (2 years) and Bachelor's Degree (3 years). Additionally, there are two kinds of graduate (second cycle) level degrees: 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.



Eligibility for studies

In order to study at a university or university college, you must meet the general and specific entry requirements for the course or programme you've applied to.

General entry requirements

All courses and programmes have certain basic requirements. If you have a higher education preparatory upper secondary qualification (gymnasieexamen) from a Swedish upper secondary school (gymnasium) or from a municipal adult education programme, you meet the general entry requirements for higher education studies in Sweden.

Even those students with a professional or vocational qualification from a Swedish upper secondary school or adult education programme with a passing grade (A–E) in Swedish or Swedish as a second language 2 + 3 and English 6 meet the general entry requirements for higher education studies. If you are missing the Swedish or English qualification, you must study and pass these courses.

If you have completed your upper secondary school education in another country that qualifies you for higher education studies in your home country, you will most likely be eligible in Sweden provided that you meet the Swedish, English and mathematics requirements.

You can also acquire general eligibility through so-called 'reell kompetens' or prior learning. More information about assessment of prior learning can be found on each institution's website.

Specific entry requirements

For most courses, students are required to show additional previous knowledge. This is called specific eligibility. An example could be an engineering programme, where a student would need to have successfully completed a higher level mathematics course and other natural sciences courses. Certain courses and programmes, for example in artistic disciplines, may require a portfolio or special admission examination.

What if I don't meet the requirements?

If you do not meet the general or specific entry requirements, there are ways to acquire it. You can find more information at upper secondary schools, municipal adult education offices and folk high schools. You can also get help from a guidance counselor. See folkhogskola.nu, studera.nu or the website of your municipality for more information.

Swedish Scholastic Aptitude Test

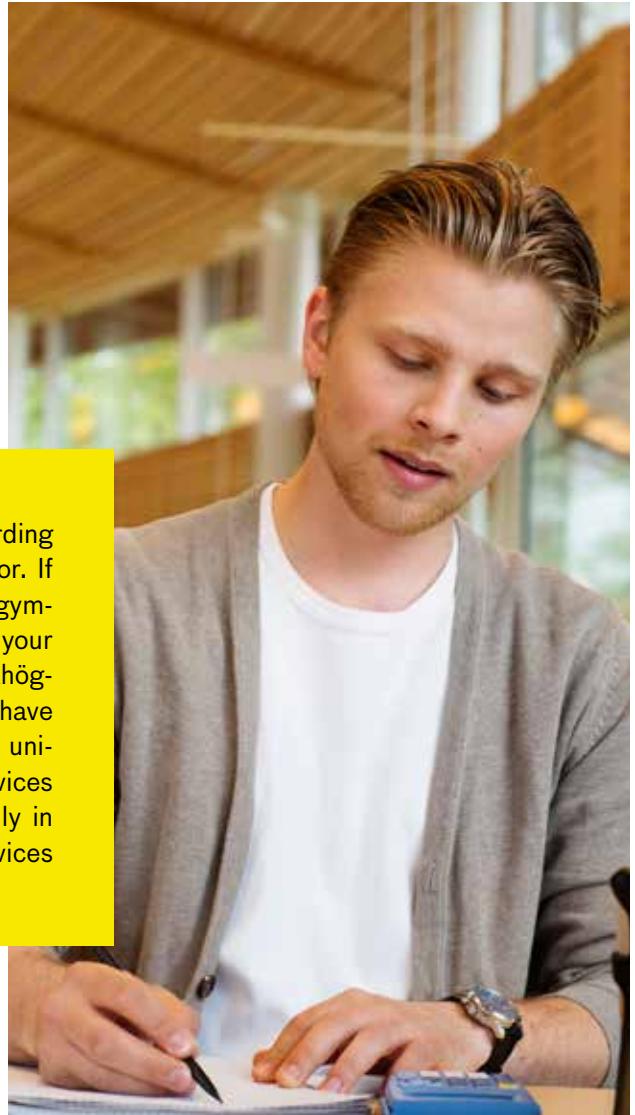
If you meet the entry requirements, you can increase your chances of being admitted by taking the Swedish Scholastic Aptitude Test. This standardised test is divided into eight sections and contains 160 multiple-choice questions. All areas with the exception of English reading comprehension are in Swedish, so a good knowledge of the Swedish language is required. The areas tested are: mathematics; quantitative comparisons; diagrams, tables and maps; data sufficiency; English reading comprehension; Swedish reading

comprehension; Swedish vocabulary; and sentence completion.

The test is held twice a year and you can take it as many times as you wish. Your results are valid for 5 years. You can apply and compete for places in courses and programmes based on both your grades and your aptitude test results, so you have nothing to lose by taking the test. You can find more information about the test (in Swedish), including application documents, at hogskoleprov.nu. For information in English about the test, please see studera.nu.

GUIDANCE COUNSELLING

A great way to get help with your questions regarding university studies is to talk with a guidance counselor. If you're attending a Swedish upper secondary school (gymnasium), you can contact the guidance counselor at your school. Students studying at a folk high school (folkhögskola) or in a municipal adult education programme have guidance counseling available to them as well. Each university and university college also has guidance services for students. 'Jämför utbildning' on studera.nu (only in Swedish) has contact information for guidance services for the universities you're interested in.





Applying for higher education

The Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR) in cooperation with Swedish universities and university colleges is responsible for the admission process to courses and programmes.

Students can apply to all Swedish universities and university colleges at the websites **Antagning.se** (for courses and programmes taught in Swedish) and **Universityadmissions.se** (for courses and programmes taught in English).

If you have a protected identity, non-disclosable personal details or for other reasons cannot apply online, you can contact UHR for assistance. More information can be found on **studera.nu** and **Antagning.se**.

Information regarding the application process, eligibility requirements and the selection process can be found on **Antagning.se** (in Swedish) or at **Universityadmissions.se** (in English). There, you can search for courses and programmes, create a user account, submit your admission application, and receive your admission results.

Please note that **Universityadmissions.se** is a website tailored to the needs of international students; however, you can find pertinent admissions information in English and the complete course catalogue of courses and programmes offered in English on the website.

The application year is divided into two semesters. The autumn semester begins in August/September and ends in the middle of January. The spring semester begins in the middle of January and ends in June.

The application deadlines are:

- For international students for courses and programmes taught in English (all students may apply in this admission round if they'd like), 15 January for the autumn semester and 15 August for spring semester
- For residents of Sweden or an EU/EES country for courses and programmes taught in Swedish and English (please note that some courses offered in the earlier round are not offered in this admission round), 15 April for the autumn semester and 15 October for the spring semester

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



Financial support

Higher education in Sweden is free of charge for citizens of an EU/EES country or Switzerland. Individuals with a residence permit in Sweden for reasons other than studies are also free from paying tuition fees. Doctoral studies are free for everyone.

As a student, you will still need money for living expenses, such as food, accommodation and course literature etc. The most common way students support themselves during their studies is to apply for student aid from the National Board of Student Aid (Centrala studiestödsnämnden, CSN). Student aid consists of student grants that you don't need to repay and a student loan that must be repaid later. You can choose to only apply for the grant if you have other financing. You can receive 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 56, but the right to borrow money falls gradually from the day you reach the age of 47.

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 as to how much money you yourself may earn during a half calendar year while you're studying before this has an impact on the amount of student aid you may receive. You do not need to provide any type of security for your loan, but you must earn a certain number of credits each semester to be able to continue to receive student aid.

Special rules apply if you are not a Swedish citizen. More information can be found on CSN's website at csn.se.

Repaying your loan

You begin repaying your study loan six months after you last received student aid at the earliest. The amount you repay per year depends on how much money you've borrowed, the rate of interest and your age. More information about repayment is available on CSN's website.

Scholarships and housing allowances

In Sweden, there are not many scholarships that students in higher education can apply for, and the ones that do exist are often not enough 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 can be found at studera.nu.

Students who are required to pay tuition fees in Sweden can apply for scholarships through the Swedish Institute, and universities and university colleges. More information can be found at studyinsweden.se.

If you are a parent between 18 and 28 years of age and have low income, you can apply for a housing allowance. You can find out more at the Swedish Social Insurance Office's website – forsakringskassan.se.

Working during studies

It's important to remember that studying takes time. Full-time studies often involve just as much work as a full-time job, i.e. 40 hours per week. Some students work part-time during their studies; however, when not in lectures, the majority of your time should be spent studying on your own or with your fellow students.



Cost of living

The following budget for male and female students was put together by the Swedish Consumer Agency (Konsumentverket). These are just estimates; everyone has the ability to save in different areas, for example food. Please note that costs are normally higher in a large city like Stockholm or Gothenburg, and less in more remote areas of Sweden.

Estimates are monthly and in Swedish kronor (SEK).

	Men	Women
Food	2,380	1,790
Personal hygiene	380	510
Clothes and shoes	590	600
Leisure time	620	620
Mobile phone	230	230
Supplies such as toilet paper, etc	100	100
Media, including internet and TV license	600	600
Home insurance	90	90
Rent	3,500	3,500
Electricity	250	250
Textbooks and other literature	750	750
Public transportation	510	510
Total	10,000	9,550

Facts & Figures

Number of students studying in Sweden each year: **357,000**

Number of programmes offered at the bachelor and master level: **more than 4,000**

Number of programmes taught in English at the bachelor and master level: **more than 700**

Per cent of the Swedish population aged 30-34 with at least two years of higher education studies: **47.5**

Maximum amount of student finance available to a full-time student per year (combination grants and loans): **90,240 SEK**

Percent of first-time applicants who were women in 2012: **58**

Number of new students with a foreign background 2011-2012: **13,100**

Number of students studying distance education: **68,000**

Number of doctoral students autumn semester 2012: **19,000**

Number of students studying abroad 2011-2012: **27,700**

Unemployment rate for students who had only completed secondary education: **7.3 %**

Unemployment rate for students who had studied at the higher education level: **4.8%**



Student accommodation

There are several different kinds of accommodation available for students. If you've been admitted to a course or programme at a university where you live, you can of course choose to continue living where you currently reside. Other options are renting a student apartment or a room in a student hall. If you live in a student hall, you'll have your own room and share a common kitchen with other students.

The types of accommodation available for students can vary depending on where the university is located. The best place to find information about what's avail-

able is on the website of the university you're planning on attending. Student accommodation – and information regarding it – may be provided by the institution, the Student Union, or by private housing companies.

Finding a place to live during your studies can be a challenge. It is very important to start your search early, especially if you'll be studying in a large town or city. At **studera.nu**, you can find contact information for all the universities and university colleges in Sweden, as well as information about guaranteed accommodation.

Employment after your studies

The best place to find information about jobs and professions, employment prospects, and the education they require is the Swedish Public Employment Services office. Their website, **arbetsformedlingen.se**, has a great deal of useful information for researching career information and for individuals looking for employment. At **studera.nu** you will find employment market projections for various study programmes.

If you've completed studies in another country, you can have them evaluated by the Swedish Council for Higher Education. If you apply for university studies in Sweden, your upper secondary and higher education qualifications will be evaluated in terms of your eligibility for the course or programme you've applied for. You can also request a separate evaluation of your

qualifications for employment purposes. This assessment is important for you and your employer when you apply for a job. In the case of professions that require official authorisation, registration etc., other authorities will evaluate your qualifications. You can find more information from the Swedish Council for Higher Education at **uhr.se**.

Other ways to study

There are other options for students who wish to continue their studies after upper secondary school. Higher Vocational Education (Yrkeshögskolan) combines theoretical and practical studies in close cooperation with employers and industry. Programmes are offered in fields where there is a demand for competence in that area. More information can be found at yrkeshogskolan.se.

Studying abroad

Most Swedish universities have agreements with foreign universities for different types of study abroad programmes. Your time studying abroad is considered a part of your Swedish programme and the credits you earn at the host institution will be accepted upon your return.

In order to participate in a study abroad programme, you must be accepted to a Swedish university or university college and, in most cases, you must have completed a certain number of credits in Sweden before leaving for your study time in a foreign country.

Students may use their grant and loan from CSN toward their studies abroad. In many cases, students are also eligible for an additional scholarship. You should contact the international coordinator at your university to find out more. There is also information about studying abroad at studera.nu.

Students can also study courses and programmes at a folk high school. There are approximately 175 folk high schools in Sweden, offering alternative adult education in a number of subject areas. Folk high schools can help prepare students for university, or provide individuals with further learning in areas that interest them. Find out more at folkhogskola.nu.

Erasmus+

The largest student exchange programme is called Erasmus+, the European Union's programme for studies in Europe. Erasmus+ offers students the opportunity to study from 3 – 12 months at a university in another European country. Erasmus students do not pay tuition fees and receive a scholarship of 315 or 375 euro per month. Erasmus+ students can study at the bachelor's, master's or doctoral level.

You can find out more about the Erasmus+ programme on studera.nu.



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This brochure was created by the Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR), a government agency that works with questions regarding education, development, and exchange between schools, higher education institutions and working life. UHR provides information about higher education studies in Sweden and abroad through their website studera.nu. There, you can find out more about studying in Sweden including entry requirements, practical information and much more. UHR also manages the admission process to Swedish universities on Universityadmissions.se and Antagning.se.



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