Programme syllabus

Master's Programme, Sustainable Urban Transition, 120 credits
Masterprogram, hållbar stadsutveckling
120.0 credits

Valid for students admitted to the education from autumn 12 (HT - Autumn term; VT - Spring term).

This is a translation of the Swedish, legally binding, programme syllabus.

Programme objectives

The information is valid for students who started the program academic year 2013/2014. Later decisions may affect year 2 in the program. Please look at www.kth.se/studies/?l=en_UK for further information.

In addition to the general objectives for Masters programmes as stated in the national degree ordinance and the local degree policy of KTH, specific learning outcomes are defined for studies the Nordic Masters programme Sustainable Urban Transitions. For each of the five tracks in the program a set of learning outcomes has been defined. For the two tracks KTH is involved in, Urban and Regional Transitions (UR Trans) and Transitions of Urban Structures (TRUST) following learning outcomes have been defined:

Knowledge and understanding

Urban and Regional Transitions (UR Trans)

- Demonstrate knowledge on the theoretical concepts and foundations in urban and regional planning, sustainable development and governance.
- Demonstrate in-depth knowledge on the processes that contribute to urban change, the actors taking part in these processes as well as the societal, economic and environmental determinants that further sustainable urban transition.
- Demonstrate specialised knowledge on the tools and methods that can be applied to analyse the conditions and prerequisites for urban transition.
- Demonstrate a sound understanding of the relation between theory and practice in urban planning and regional development, as well as of the linkages to other disciplines involved in the transition process at the local, regional and global level.

Transitions of Urban Structures

- Insight in how sustainability and urban development are interdependent.
- Knowledge and a better understanding of the connections between land use, urban form and urban infrastructure.
- Knowledge about how integrated overall planning issues for land use, transport and urban infrastructure can contribute to a more sustainable urban development.
- An understanding of urban transitions and the implications for future urban development in cities of the North and the South.
Skills and abilities

Urban and Regional Transitions (UR Trans)

- Be able to assess and manage complex problems and challenges regarding urban and regional development and planning taking into account the societal, economical, environmental and political context.

- 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.

- Be able to make effective oral and written presentations of complex tasks related to urban development using modern techniques and tools to illustrate and visualise plans, concepts and strategies.

- Be able to lead and work in multidisciplinary groups and contribute to the outcome of the working task.

Transitions of Urban Structures

- Insight in developing land use, transport and infrastructure plans for a more sustainable city development, based on the principle of an integrated planning process.

- Ability to use geographical information systems (GIS) as an important tool in urban planning.

- Judgement and approach

- Insight in and being more aware of the challenges connected to the global environmental challenges and living conditions

- Ability of leading integrated planning processes and using the knowledge in processes that are firmly rooted with the citizens.

- Ability to develop strategic plans for a larger city in relation to the transition of the technical infrastructure and the interaction between

Ability to make judgements and adopt a standpoint

- Be able to analyse the merits of theoretical concepts, policies, plans and projects based on a comprehensive assessment.

- Be able to detect implicit assumptions in theoretical and societal views on planning problems.

- Demonstrate the ability to contextualize planning objectives and policies in different timely, cultural and institutional backgrounds.

- Be able to develop their own opinion on the nature and manner of dealing with new planning problems

- Demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for his or her ongoing learning.

Extent and content of the programme

The Masters programme Sustainable Urban Transitions counts 120 hp and consists of three terms of coursework and one term for the degree project, together 2 years. The course-work encompasses a combination of theoretical courses, exercises, projects and studios that aim at providing students with knowledge and skills in the field of sustainable urban development and planning. All courses in the programme are at advanced (2nd cycle) level. The language of instruction is English.
The Nordic Master program Sustainable Urban Transitions is a joint two-year master program that is offered by Aalto University, Chalmers University of Technology (CTH), Technical University of Denmark (DTU), Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) and the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU). The program covers five tracks:

- Human Oriented Urban Transitions (Aalto University and CTH)
- Area Based Urban Transitions (CTH, Aalto University and NTNU)
- Urban Ecology (NTNU, CTH and Aalto University)
- Transition of Urban Structures – TRUST (NTNU, KTH and DTU)
- Urban Regional Transitions – UR Trans (KTH, Aalto University and DTU)

Urban Regional Transitions (UR Trans) addresses urban regional interactions as a means for urban development at the local and regional level. Regions as an object for planning are becoming more important, not only to strengthen the region but also to support the individual cities within the region. However, the regions’ significance and focus in planning differ from case to case. In a global context, major metropolitan regions (e.g. London, Shanghai, New York, Singapore, and Dubai) are competing with each other in creating favourable conditions for business and industries. On the other hand, regional development is often discussed at the European and national level, as part of a strategy to counteract the impacts of depopulation, unemployment and the lack of services in rural areas. A core issue in this track is to equip students with a deeper understanding of alternative strategies for creating competitive sustainable urban regions. This requires collaborative efforts to offer an attractive environment for living and economic activities. Through the integration of culture, education and retail, and by effective transportation networks, these regions cater diversified services for their residents and generate synergies which can attract new investments to the region. However, being successful at the regional level also requires achievements at the local level to create living conditions that allow sustainable socio-ecological development.

Transition of Urban Structures (TRUST) refers to the challenges of sustainable urban development. In order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve the urban environment and citizen’s living conditions, the urban structure including the infrastructure, land use and transportation pattern must be reconsidered. A great challenge to urban development is to design the urban structure in a way that reduces the cities’ ecological footprint. This requires a long-term change of urban structures to facilitate a future development which focuses on existing building zones which need to be converted and densified without compromising existing qualities of the city. This involves that city reconstruction will be the future predominant way to build a city, where development of a city's land use, transportation system and infrastructure will require relocation of the businesses in town.

**Eligibility and selection**

The admission requirements for the Nordic masters’ programme in Sustainable Urban Transition differ between the tracks, depending on the admission requirements of the partner universities involved in the study track. Students who apply to KTH for admission to Urban Regional Transitions (UR Trans) can complete their studies in year 2 at either Aalto University or DTU. For students who aim to be admitted to the track Transitions of Urban Structures should apply to NTNU.

Students who start at KTH and continue their studies at Aalto University need a completed Bachelor's degree in Architecture, corresponding to a Swedish Bachelor's degree (180 ECTS), or equivalent academic qualifications from an internationally recognised university.

Students who start at KTH and continue their studies at DTU need a completed Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering in the Built Environment, corresponding to a Swedish Bachelor's degree (180 ECTS), or equivalent academic qualifications from an internationally recognised university. In addition, students should have completed courses in the following fields:

a.: Operations research, Operations Management and Engineering Economy
b.: Urban Planning, Project Management and Management & Organization

At least 5 ECTS has to be obtained in field a, at least 5 ECTS in field b and at least 15 ECTS in total in the two fields.

Students with a B.Eng degree (Diplomingeniør (DK), Polytechnic (FI), Högskoleingenjör (SE) or equivalent) must have completed courses within the areas of operations research or discrete mathematics (5 ECTS) and algorithms and stochastic processes (5 ECTS).

For English language proficiency following requirements are defined:

TOEFL: Paper-based: 580 (written section grade 4,5) or Internet-based test: 92 (written section grade 22)

IELTS: 6.5, no section lower than 5.5 (only IELTS Academic Training accepted).

Students in their final year of their undergraduate education may also apply and if qualified, receive a conditional acceptance.

For candidates fulfilling the admission requirements, the ranking and selection of students is carried out by the partner universities on basis of the student’s academic achievements, motivation letter and portfolios (for students in Architecture and Landscape Architecture).

**Implementation of the education**

**Structure of the education**

Structure of the education

Since the program results in a double degree, student should complete at least 60 ECTS of coursework at KTH and at a partner university. Students who apply to the masters program Sustainable Urban Transitions at KTH will start their first year of studies (60 ECTS) in the track Urban Regional Transitions (UR Trans) at KTH and continue at either DTU or Aalto University to complete their second year of studies (60 ECTS), including a 30 ECTS degree project. Students who are admitted to the track Transitions of Urban Structures TRUST, complete the first year (60 ECTS) at NTNU and continue the second year of studies at KTH (60 ECTS) or DTU (60 ECTS). The second year of studies includes a 30 ECTS degree project.

During the first year in the track Urban Regional Transitions (UR Trans) at KTH, the determinants of urban and regional transformation will be addressed. These encompass the role of cities in regional contexts, the prerequisites for infrastructure and urban development as well as the economic mechanisms that facilitate or constrain transitions processes. Sustainable development is a key question during the entire study, and students will be challenged to transform overall objectives into policies, plans and actions. The course work encompasses a substantial share of studios and projects that aim to develop your practical skills and to gain a better understanding of planning practice. To support the professional training and to strengthen analytical skills, the curriculum also contains a number of theoretical and methodological courses that provide a contextual and conceptual framework.

In the second year in this track, the acquired knowledge can be deepened at either Aalto University or DTU. The second year at DTU will allow the student to use the knowledge about urban regional strategies to develop a strategy on a city (municipal) scale. This will be complemented with a classic analysis of the relationship between infrastructure and land use in an international metropolitan region. Students continuing their studies at Aalto University will continue to develop skills in the particular areas of interdisciplinary and creative understanding and action, particularly at the regional level. They will address the key issues of regional development through laboratory work and selected studies from the university’s six Schools. They will be working in a new School combining the creative disciplines (architecture, urban design, urban and regional planning, design, media, and arts), but they will also have access to a variety of courses offered by the four Schools of Technology and the School of Economics. The core of their studies will be the Urban Laboratory, where they will address a selected contemporary issue related to local urban development.
(such as local impacts of globalization, regional segregation, multiculturalism, migration, networking of cities, etc.), coupled with potential field studies and courses in urban and regional studies. The Laboratory continues during the second semester to support the writing of the Master’s Thesis. Common seminars with the supervising team from the two or three universities involved will be arranged.

Students who want to join the study track Transitions of Urban Structures (TRUST) will start at NTNU in Trondheim, where the students will be given an introduction to planning for sustainable urban development both in a local and a Nordic context. The first two semesters the teaching will be offered at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology where the Faculty of Architecture and Fine Art will be responsible for the program. This track is offered every second year starting in September 2012.

Students with a B.Sc. (eng) background can stay the third semester DTU in Copenhagen. The second year at DTU will allow the student to go even deeper into analyzing the relationship between infrastructure and land use development by studying the plans and actual developments of an international metropolitan region. This will be complemented with the opportunity for the student to develop a strategy for future development of a chosen larger city. Students with a background in architecture or planning proceed their studies in the third semester at KTH in Stockholm. The second year at KTH offers two courses that refer to the human dimensions of urban environments, which are studied both from a theoretical and empirical perspective. In addition, students can choose among two project courses, either towards planning or urban design. The projects are advanced learning experiences in which students should address some of the main challenges in contemporary urban planning and design in a practical setting. In the fourth semester students conduct a degree project.

A course in Theory of Science and Research Methodology (7.5 ects) is mandatory for all master programs at KTH and students who have not completed an equivalent course in their previous studies, should choose the course Theory of Science and Research Methodology in Planning and Design or Theory and Methods of Science or equivalent during their studies in the program.

The academic year covers 40 weeks, starting in September and divided into two terms, which each consists of two study periods. Each study period concludes with a regular examination period of at least one week. In addition, three re-exam periods are scheduled, after Christmas, after the regular examination period of study period 4 (end of May) and before the start of a new academic year (August).

As part of the Nordic masters program Sustainable Urban Transitions, joint extra curricular activities will be organised by the institutions involved in the program, e.g. summer schools. These activities aim to exchange experiences and knowledge among the participants, and gain knowledge on a topical subject in the field of sustainable urban development and planning. All students in the program will attend these activities.

Courses

The programme is course-based. Lists of courses are included in appendix 1.

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During the first year at KTH in the track Urban Regional Transition (UR Trans), the program includes a set of courses which allows students to acquire specialised professional skills. In the second year in the track Transitions of Urban Structures (TRUST), KTH offers two alternative projects (15 ECTS) that students can choose between. Students can apply to exchange a course for another course that is not included in the curriculum of the program. A decision is made from case to case considering the student’s previous knowledge and relevance for the degree project. The course Theory of Science and Research Methodology in Planning and Design or equivalent is mandatory. A full list of courses is included in appendix 1.

Grading system

Courses in the first and the second cycle are graded on a scale from A to F. A-E are passing grades, A is the highest grade. The grades pass (P) and fail (F) are used for courses under certain circumstances.

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All courses in the programme, including the Master’s Degree project, are graded on a scale A-F, where A-E are passing grades with A as the highest grade. For some sections in the courses a grading system of pass (P) or fail (F) can be applied, for example for attendance. The grade reflects the students’ performance in relation to the goals of the course (goal oriented grading).

Conditions for participation in the programme

For citizens of a country within the EU/EEA or Switzerland, the application and tuition is free of charge. Non EU/EEA students will be charged fees at the university he/she is studying in accordance with the prevailing university regulations, i.e. he/she has to pay fees for 2 semesters at KTH and 2 semesters at DTU or Aalto University.

Students who have been admitted to the programme have to attend the registration meeting in order to enrol for the programme. Students who received conditional acceptance should provide documented proof that he/she has a completed Bachelor's degree or equivalent to a minimum of 180 ECTS. If a student is not able to attend the registration meeting for reasons beyond his/her control he/she should register not later than two weeks after the start of the courses.

After registration in the programme, students will be registered for term 1 and 2. For registration in term 3 students should have completed at least 45hp. For registration for the degree project students should have completed at least 60 hp of the compulsory courses. After being admitted to a course, students should register themselves within one week after course start If a student for reasons beyond his/her control is not able to attend during the first week he/she has to contact the course administrator.

Recognition of previous academic studies

The Royal Institute of Technology has a policy for recognising previous academic studies. The course that the student wants to be recognised should be similar to a course in the curriculum of the specialisation track in which the student is registered in terms of contents, level and number of credits. Moreover, the courses that the student wants to be recognised should not be part of the bachelor program that was basis for admission to the masters program. The decision on recognising documented results is made by the vice dean of education at the School of Architecture and the Built Environment upon application by the student.

Studies abroad

The Nordic master program Sustainable Urban Transitions involves one year of mandatory studies at one of the partner universities. For students in the track Urban Regional Transitions (UR Trans) this implies that students have to complete one year of studies (60 ECTS) at DTU or Aalto University. The programme offers no opportunities for studies at another university except for the Master’s Degree project where the student can choose to carry out a study at an organisation outside KTH, DTU or Aalto University. However, the program has no resources to provide support so students should make such arrangements themselves.

Degree project

The degree project comprises 30 ECTS and provides students with the opportunity to investigate a problem in depth under the supervision of experienced practitioners and researchers.

Students in the Urban Regional Transitions (UR Trans) will conduct the Degree project at the second year university (DTU or Aalto University) who provides the main supervisor, while KTH provides a co-supervisor. Students in the Transitions of Urban Structures (TRUST) can conduct the Degree project at KTH or DTU who provide the main supervisor. In these Degree projects a staff member of NTNU will offer co-supervision. The supervision from each of the two degree awarding institutions involved in the study ensures the integration of the program components.

The degree project is graded on a scale A-F, where A-E are passing grades with A as the highest grade. The grading of degree projects is based on an overall assessment of working process, scientific contents and presentation.

Degree

Students who have fulfilled all course requirements in the Masters programme (60 ECTS at two partner universities) will be awarded a double degree. Following degree will be issued:
KTH: Master of Science (120 ECTS)

DTU: Master of Science in Engineering

Aalto: Master of Science in Architecture

NTNU: Master of Physical Planning

Website

More information on the Nordic masters program Sustainable Urban Transitions and the other tracks within the program is available on the website www.nmpsut.org.

Appendix 1 - Course list
Appendix 2 - Programme syllabus descriptions
Appendix 1: Course list

Master's Programme, Sustainable Urban Transition, 120 credits (THSUM), Programme syllabus for studies starting in autumn 2012

**General courses**

**Year 1**

**Recommended courses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course code</th>
<th>Course name</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Edu. level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AD2845</td>
<td>Principles of Real Estate and Urban Economics</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Second cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG2116</td>
<td>City Networks in Regional Contexts</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Second cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG2126</td>
<td>Theory of Science and Research Methodology for Planning and Design</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Second cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG2127</td>
<td>Planning Theory and Urban Governance</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Second cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG2128</td>
<td>Urban Development and Planning</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Second cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG2141</td>
<td>Urban Infrastructure</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Second cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG2171</td>
<td>Futures Studies and Forecasts</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Second cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG2805</td>
<td>Sustainable Planning and Design</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>Second cycle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Supplementary information**

* Students who apply to the masters program Sustainable Urban Transitions at KTH will start their first year of studies (60 ECTS) in the Track Urban Regional Transitions (UR Trans) at KTH and continue at either DTU or Aalto University to complete their second year of studies (60 ECTS), including a 30 ECTS degree project.

* Students who apply to the masters program Sustainable Urban Transitions at KTH will start their first year of studies (60 ECTS) in the Transition of Urban Structures (TRUST) at NTNU and continue at KTH to complete their second year of studies (60 ECTS), including a 30 ECTS degree project.

Year 1 at NTNU:

AAR4515 Sustainable urban design – project 15 ECTS
http://www.ntnu.edu/studies/courses/AAR4515/2012

AAR4944 Planning for sustainability and development (Theory) 7.5 ECTS
http://www.ntnu.edu/studies/courses/AAR4944/2012

FP4350 Planning theory and process skills 7.5 ECTS
http://www.ntnu.edu/studies/courses/FP4350/2012
AAR4225 Integrated land use and transportation planning 7.5 ECTS  
http://www.ntnu.edu/studies/courses/AAR4225/2012

AAR4936 Analytical methods in physical planning 7.5 ECTS  
http://www.ntnu.edu/studies/courses/AAR4936/2012

AAR5260 GIS in urban planning 7.5 ECTS

AAR5270 Globalisation and Urban Development 7.5 ECTS  
http://www.ntnu.edu/studies/courses/AAR5270/2012

**Year 2**

**Mandatory courses (7.5 credits)**

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Credits</th>
<th>Edu. level</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AI2150</td>
<td>Theory of Science and Research Methods</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Second cycle</td>
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**Conditionally elective courses**

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Course name</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Edu. level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AD2863</td>
<td>Sustainable Urban Planning and Design Studio 2.1- Urban Ecologies</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>Second cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD2UPX</td>
<td>Degree Project in Urban Planning and Design, Second Cycle</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>Second cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG211X</td>
<td>Degree Project in Urban and Regional Planning, Second Cycle</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>Second cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG2129</td>
<td>Project Sustainable Urban Planning - Strategies for Urban and Regional Development</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>Second cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG2130</td>
<td>Applied Urban and Regional Analysis</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Second cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG2134</td>
<td>Contemporary Urban Theory, Advanced Course</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Second cycle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Supplementary information**

Students who apply to the masters program Sustainable Urban Transitions at KTH will start their first year of studies (60 ECTS) in the Track Urban Regional Transitions at KTH and continue at either DTU or Aalto University to complete their second year of studies (60 ECTS), including a 30 ECTS degree project.

**Year 2 at DTU:**

42273 Urban Planning and Sustainable Urban Development, 10 ECTS  

42278 Urban Technology and Management, 10 ECTS  

42543 Management of Change, 5 ECTS  

42401 Introduction to Planning, 5 ECTS  

Degree Project 30 ECTS

**Year 2 at Aalto University:**
Urban Laboratory (mandatory) 20 ECTS  Not available

A-36.3330 Urban Renewal, 10 ECTS  https://noppa.aalto.fi/noppa/kurssi/a-36.3330/esite

A-36.3504 City in Transition Theory, 5 ECTS  https://noppa.aalto.fi/noppa/kurssi/a-36.3504/esite


21E10000 How to Change the World: Innovation towards Sustainability, 6 ECTS  https://noppa.aalto.fi/noppa/kurssi/21e10000/esite

10157 Designing Services, 12 ECTS  https://noppa.aalto.fi/noppa/kurssi/10157/esite

21A00310 Introduction to Management, 6 ECTS  https://noppa.aalto.fi/noppa/kurssi/21a00310/esite


Degree Project

* Students who apply to the masters program Sustainable Urban Transitions at KTH will start their first year of studies (60 ECTS) in the Transition of Urban Structures (TRUST) at NTNU and continue at KTH to complete their second year of studies (60 ECTS), including a 30 ECTS degree project.
Appendix 2: Specialisations

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This programme has no specialisations.