



PRINCIPLES OF THE CURRICULA FOR DEGREE-AWARDING EDUCATION (BACHELOR'S,  
MASTER'S) AT JAMK UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

2020

Approved on 28 August 2019  
by the JAMK University of Applied Sciences Student Affairs Board

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

These principles of the curricula apply to all degree programmes at JAMK University of Applied Sciences.

JAMK's principal strategic direction is to develop a model for the reinvented institute of higher education and a curriculum in support of this development. The reinvented institute of higher education is an international community that is digital, virtual, versatile and entrepreneurial and facilitates lifelong learning. Learning is based on student-centred learning, learning tasks, learning partnerships and the application of state-of-the-art technology. The focus of learning will move in a diverse and student-oriented direction that activates students, to study modules smaller than degrees and to learning by employed persons. The renewed university will take care of people's skills throughout their career. (JAMK strategy 2016–2020)

## 2 BASICS OF CURRICULAR WORK

The basics of curricula of degree-awarding education are the basic mission of education according to polytechnics legislation, the Bologna Declaration, the Government Programme as well as the regional preparation for education needs.

The JAMK University of Applied Sciences applies competence level descriptions according to the European Qualification Framework (EQF/NQF), as well as the Act (93/2017) and Decree (120/2017) on the national qualifications framework (NQF). The EQF/NQF level corresponding to the competence of a bachelor's degree is 6 and that of a master's degree 7.

Additionally, the education planning takes into account the policies set out in the contract between the Ministry of Education and Culture and JAMK University of Applied Sciences for 2021–2024 and, where applicable, the policies concerning the accreditation of international degree programmes and the development of working life and the region, the Degree Regulations, and the quality system. The education process is carried out according to the pedagogical and ethical principles and the principles of instruction and guidance confirmed by the JAMK University of Applied Sciences' Student Affairs Board.

The curricula support the choices and overarching themes of the JAMK strategy 2016–2020 and its upgraded version 2021–2024. The renewal of learning guarantees that the students who graduate from JAMK possess the digital and learning skills required by future working life and the competences required for employment. JAMK is an entrepreneurship-oriented institute of higher education that enables the development of new business and entrepreneurship and encourages students to pursue innovation activities, learn about entrepreneurship and create entrepreneurship. JAMK is also an international institute of higher education. All degree programmes offer studies in English, and the degree programmes recognise the themes of sustainable development, ethicality and global responsibility. The aim is to make the quality of operations and education internationally recognised. The curricula recognise the opportunities for lifelong or continuous learning, because according to our strategy, the focus of the development of education is on implementing education models that benefit degree-awarding education but are narrower in scope and meet the competence needs of working life more quickly.

The competence-based and modular curricula correspond to the competence needs of the future working life and are internationally comparable, student-oriented, flexible and open, offering not only degree-awarding education, but also opportunities for continuous learning and updating of one's competences. The competence-based curriculum is described in more detail in section 3 and the modular structure of the curricula in section 4.

The flexible progress of studies is supported by means of information, guidance and counselling services,

studies in support of student well-being, year-round courses offering in open and digital learning environments, recognition of prior learning and studification of work or other comparable activities. The services in support of studies and students are described in the Study Guide and in the pedagogical principles and principles of study guidance.

The curriculum work has been carried out in collaboration with operators from EduFutura, the Jyväskylä Educational Consortium Gradia and the University of Jyväskylä. For the student, the EduFutura cooperation makes it possible to pursue cross-institutional studies, allowing the student to utilise the courses offering of partner institutes of education as part of their personal learning plan.

According to the Universities of Applied Sciences Act ([941/2017](#), section 8a), a student may expand their degree to include studies offered by another institution of higher education. This requires that cooperation between the institutions has been agreed upon and that the studies have been incorporated into the student's Personal Learning Plan at JAMK.

### **3 COMPETENCE ACHIEVED IN THE DEGREE PROGRAMME**

#### **3.1 Competence-based curricula**

The competence achieved in the degree programme is described in the curriculum of each respective degree programme. The learning objectives of the study modules and courses are described in the intended learning outcomes. They describe what kind of theoretical, practical and self-regulation skills the student will possess after completing the degree and what the student will know, understand and can do as the outcome of the learning process.

The competence achieved in the degree programmes of JAMK University of Applied Sciences are structured as follows:

Bachelor's degrees:

- Core competence: common working life competence (basic studies) and professional core competence (professional studies, practical training to promote vocational skills and the bachelor's thesis)
- Complementary competence (expands/deepens the core competence; optional professional studies and elective studies)

Master's degrees:

- Core competence: expert core competence and shared master competence (advanced professional studies and the master's thesis)
- Complementary competence (expands/deepens the core competence; optional professional studies and elective studies)

See the explanatory figure in Appendix 1: Relationship between studies regulated by the decree and the competences conferred by the degree

### 3.2 Common working life competences

The common working life competences (in bachelor's and master's degrees) defined by JAMK are the competences achieved by every student who has completed the degree (see Table 1).

The common working life competences lay the foundation for operating in working life, cooperation and development of expertise. The studies in all bachelor's and master's degree programmes offered by JAMK University of Applied Sciences make it possible for the students to achieve these common working life competences, including (a) learning and information management competence, (b) entrepreneurship, innovation and working community competence, (c) internationalisation and communications competence, and (d) ethical competence (see Table 1).

Table 1. Common working life competences conferred by bachelor's degrees (EQF/NQF 6) and master's degrees (EQF/NQF 7)

Common working life competences	Learning outcome EQF /NQF 6 Bachelor's degree student	Learning outcome EQF /NQF 7 Master's degree student
<b>1. Learning and information management competence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ evaluates, develops and makes visible their personal competence by means of continuous learning</li> <li>○ takes care of their study abilities and assumes responsibility for their own competence development and that of their community as well as the sharing of the lessons learned</li> <li>○ acquires, processes, evaluates and applies critically the knowledge, principles, theories and methods of their own field</li> <li>○ evaluates and utilises digital environments and tools in their work duties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ evaluates and develops in a goal-oriented manner their expertise by means of continuous learning</li> <li>○ assumes responsibility for their own goal-oriented learning and that of their community as well as competence sharing</li> <li>○ acquires, processes, produces and evaluates knowledge critically and utilises knowledge from various fields in a purposeful manner</li> <li>○ evaluates, utilises and applies digital environments and tools in various kinds of networks</li> </ul>
<b>2. Entrepreneurship, innovation and working community competence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ is capable of working independently in expert positions or as an entrepreneur in their field, creating networks and partnerships</li> <li>○ is capable of creative problem-solving and development of working practices in collaboration with their community</li> <li>○ anticipates the future of their field and the changes in their operating environment</li> <li>○ is capable of decision-making in unforeseen circumstances and various kinds of operating environments</li> <li>○ adopts abilities and operating practices for assuming responsibility for their own well-being and that of their community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ is capable of working as a developer of working life in demanding expert and managerial positions or as an entrepreneur</li> <li>○ develops and creates new operations that are customer-driven, sustainable and financially profitable, with due account taken of the foreseen changes in the operating environment</li> <li>○ manages things, people and networks and applied research, development and innovation projects</li> <li>○ develops the operation and occupational well-being of the work communities</li> </ul>
<b>3. Internationalisation and communications competence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ operates smoothly in working life interaction and communication situations</li> <li>○ utilises various kinds of communication forms, channels and environments</li> <li>○ takes the effects and opportunities of the internationalisation development of their field into account in their work</li> <li>○ operates in a multicultural environment and is capable of working internationally in their field</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ develops transdisciplinary working life communication and interaction</li> <li>○ develops the various communication forms, channels and environments in their field</li> <li>○ predicts the effects of and opportunities provided by internationalisation development in their professional field</li> <li>○ operates in multicultural and international networks and operating environments</li> </ul>
<b>4. Ethical competence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ acts ethically in their work communities and networks</li> <li>○ applies the principles of equality and non-discrimination in their actions and promotes global responsibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ promotes the implementation of sustainable development principles and social responsibility as a developer of working life</li> <li>○ applies the principles of equality and non-discrimination in their actions and promotes global responsibility</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ understands and applies the principles of good scientific practice</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ applies the principles of good scientific practice and open science in their actions</li></ul>
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### 3.3 Degree programme core competence

The core competence of bachelor's degrees is described as professional core competence. In the fields of education that contain several bachelor's degree programmes, the core competence can be divided into degree-specific and field-specific core competence. In master's degrees, core competence is described as expert core competence and as shared master's competence common to all master's degree programmes (Leadership and Research and development activities). The core competences of bachelor's and master's degree programmes consist of extensive modules that make up the student's professional expertise and the core of the degree.

The core competence of the degree is established in collaboration with stakeholders, students, working life and EduFutura partners, with due account taken of foresight work. The competence meets the future working life needs of each respective field.

In accredited degree programmes, JAMK's common working life competences are matched with the skills required by the accreditation criteria.

### 3.4 Complementary competence

Complementary competence deepens and/or extends the student's core competence and provides the student with an opportunity to build a unique degree. The importance of complementary competence in degrees is growing rapidly as the skills needed in working life change at an increasingly faster pace.

Complementary competence includes the statutory elective studies and optional professional studies. Complementary competence may be composed of multidisciplinary studies across different fields of study, such as the courses offered by JAMK's Future Factory, the entrepreneurship studies offered by the Startup Factory, the core competence courses offering of different degree programmes, the courses offered by the student union JAMKO, studies in support of student well-being, the studies offered by the language centre, and studies completed elsewhere, such as the courses offered by EduFutura and CampusOnline and courses completed as part of international student exchange.

Complementary competence can also be recognised based on previously acquired competence or during studies by means of studification of work or other activities. In this case, the competence level must be in accordance with EQF/NQF level 6 in a bachelor's degree and EQF/NQF level 7 in a master's degree as well as the learning objectives of the studies concerned.

The curricula of bachelor's degree programmes allow at least 30 ECTS credits' worth of complementary competence studies to be pursued as optional professional studies and 10 ECTS credits as elective studies.

The master's degree curricula allow at least 5 ECTS credits' worth of complementary competence studies to be pursued in 60 ECTS credit degree programmes, and at least 20 ECTS credits in 90 ECTS credit degree programmes.

## 4 MODULAR STRUCTURE OF THE DEGREE PROGRAMME CURRICULUM

A modular curriculum allows individual study paths in both degree education and continuing education. The degree programme consists of competence-based modules, which in turn consist of courses. Study modules are larger wholes than individual courses. The recommended scope of a study module is at least 15 ECTS



credits and that of a course normally 5 ECTS credits.

A student may achieve the learning objectives of a study module by completing courses offered by JAMK or by proving, by means of various kinds of skills demonstrations, that they have acquired corresponding competence elsewhere, previously or during their studies. The purpose of the modules is to make it possible to utilise the competence acquired by the student as a part of their degree in a more flexible way than before, so that in future, modules will not only be a tool for courses, but also for recognition of prior learning and experience. In other words, a module is needed when the student already has the competence corresponding to the module's learning objectives (recognition of prior learning and experience), in studification, and in the provision of continuous learning. If the student has no need for the recognition of prior learning and experience otherwise acquired, the student will complete the JAMK courses included in the module according to their personal learning plan.

The principles for recognition of prior learning and experience and assessment at JAMK are described in more detail in the Degree Regulations and practices in the Study Guide.

A module in the curriculum

- is a coherent body of subject matter and competence structured around a core theme or core competence
- can be accredited or studied
- can be transdisciplinary
- can be a common EduFutura module
- can be an integral part of continuous learning courses offering, such as open studies or continuing education
- may include common working life competence, core competence and complementary competence courses
- courses in a module may be spread over different semesters or years
- can be completed either in its entirety or as individual courses, depending on whether the studies concerned are part of common working life competence, core competence or complementary competence
- have learning objectives defined for them for the purpose of recognition of prior learning and experience conferred by the module as a whole.

The learning outcomes of modules and courses are so defined that they are linked to the competences of the degree programme and/or common working life competences, and their achievement is assessed during the course of studies. The courses are described according to the ECTS system.

## **5 STUDIES IN SUPPORT OF COMMON WORKING LIFE COMPETENCES OF THE DEGREE PROGRAMMES**

The following courses that support the common working life competences are included in the personal learning plan of every UAS student:

- Development as an Expert (5 cr)
- Swedish for Working Life (4 cr), English for Working Life (4 cr)
- Communication Skills (3 cr)
- ICT skills (3 cr)
- Research and Development (5 cr)
- Entrepreneurship (3 cr) and JAMK InnoFlash (2 cr) (in the JAMK Future Factory module)

In addition to the studies described above, each bachelor's degree student will complete practical training to promote professional skills (at least 30 cr) as well as a Future Factory project that strengthens both the degree programme core competence and common working life competences (10 cr or 5 + 5 cr) and a thesis (15 cr). The Development as an Expert course (5 cr) includes studies aimed at supporting the student's self-management and care of one's own resources and well-being. Additionally, all students will have the opportunity to include studies related to student well-being as part of their studies as described in the Study Guide.

The personal learning plan of each master's degree student includes at least 5 ECTS credits' worth of studies in research and development activities and management in support of the shared master competence in 60 ECTS credit degree programmes, and at least 15 ECTS credits in 90 ECTS credit degree programmes. Research-based Development (5 cr) is included in the personal learning plan of every master's degree student.

## 6 GUIDANCE AND ASSESSMENT

The development of competence is supported during education by diverse and systematic counselling services provided throughout the entire study period, as well as by a personal learning plan (PLP) based on continuous enhancement-led evaluation. The counselling is carried out according to the principles of study guidance confirmed by the JAMK University of Applied Sciences Student Affairs Board.

The studies begin with the preparation of a personal learning plan (PLP). As part of the preparation of the PLP, discussions will be conducted on recognition of prior learning and experience acquired by the student and on the studification of work or other activities. The principles and practices for recognition of prior learning and experience are described in more detail in the Degree Regulations (section 17) and in the Study Guide (<https://studyguide.jamk.fi/en/>).

The assessment of competence is based on learning objectives, quality and criteria, and self-evaluation by the student plays an important role in the process. The principles and practices for the assessment of study attainments are described in more detail in the Degree Regulations (section 21) and in the Study Guide (<https://studyguide.jamk.fi/en/>).

## 7 PREPARATION OF CURRICULA AND THE PERSONS IN CHARGE

The curriculum of a degree programme describes: (a) what competence the graduate has gained, (b) how the professional growth and know-how is expressed and assessed as the learning outcome of the student, (c) how the education has been planned and how the competence needs of working life have been anticipated in the unit and together with vocational higher education and other networks, students and working life, and (d) who has been in charge of the planning work. The starting point of the degree programme supports the student's learning process, which has been taken into account in the planning of study modules and the structuring of assessment. The curricula are prepared in accordance with the ECTS principles.

The structure, scope, planned timing and outcomes of the studies that are formed during the education are described in more detail in the Study Guide (<https://studyguide.jamk.fi/en/>).

Each degree programme supports the implementation of the goals defined in JAMK's strategy 2016–2020 and in its upgraded version 2021–2024 as well as in the contract between the Ministry of Education and Culture and JAMK University of Applied Sciences in its own operating environment and stakeholder work. The quality

management procedures defined in the JAMK Process and Quality Manual are complied with in the preparation of the degree programme curriculum.

## Appendices

Appendix 1. Relationship between studies regulated by the decree and the competences conferred by the degree

### Relationship between studies regulated by the decree (1129/2014, section 2) and the competences conferred by the degree

