



Curriculum for the upper secondary school

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1. Fundamental values and tasks of the school

Fundamental values

The national school system is based on democratic foundations. The Education Act (2010:800) stipulates that education in the school system aims at students acquiring and developing knowledge and values. It should promote the development and learning of students, and a lifelong desire to learn. Education should impart and establish respect for human rights and the fundamental democratic values on which Swedish society is based. The education should be based on scientific grounds and proven experience. Each and everyone working in the school should also encourage respect for the intrinsic value of each person and the environment we all share.

The inviolability of human life, individual freedom and integrity, the equal value of all people, equality between women and men, and solidarity between people are the values that the education should represent and impart. In accordance with the ethics borne by Christian tradition and Western humanism, this is to be achieved by nurturing in the individual a sense of justice, generosity, tolerance and responsibility. Teaching should be non-denominational.

The task of the school is to encourage all students to discover their own uniqueness as individuals and thereby actively participate in the life of society by giving of their best in responsible freedom.

Understanding and compassion for others

The school should promote understanding of other people and the ability to empathise. No one in school should be subjected to discrimination on the grounds of gender, ethnic affiliation, religion or other belief system, transgender identity or its expression, sexual orientation, age or functional impairment, or to other forms of degrading treatment. All tendencies to discrimination or degrading treatment should be actively combated. Xenophobia and intolerance must be confronted with knowledge, open discussion and active measures.

The internationalisation of Swedish society and increasing cross-border mobility place high demands on the ability of people to live with and appreciate the values inherent in cultural diversity. The school is a social and cultural meeting place with both the opportunity and the responsibility to strengthen this ability among all who work there. Familiarity with the culture and history of Sweden and the Swedish language should be strengthened through teaching in many of the subjects studied in the school. A secure identity and awareness of one's own cultural origins and sharing a common cultural heritage strengthens the ability to understand and empathise with the values and conditions of others. Schools must help students to develop an identity that can be related to and encompass not only what is specifically Swedish, but also that which is Nordic, European, and ultimately global. International links and education exchange with other countries should be supported.

Objectivity and open approaches

The school should be open to different ideas and encourage their expression. It should emphasise the importance of forming personal views and provide opportunities for doing this. Teaching should be objective and encompass a range of different approaches. When values are presented, their source and status should always be made explicit.

All who work in the school should always uphold the fundamental values that are set out in the Education Act and in this curriculum, and clearly dissociate themselves from anything that conflicts with these values.

An equivalent education

Teaching should be adapted to each student's circumstances and needs.

The Education Act stipulates that education in each school form should be equivalent, irrespective of where in the country it is provided. National goals are specified through the norms for equivalence. However, equivalent education does not mean that teaching should be the same everywhere, or that the resources of the school are to be allocated equally. Account should be taken of the varying circumstances, needs and the students' level of knowledge. There are also different ways of attaining the goals of education. Special attention must be given to those students who for different reasons experience difficulties in attaining these goals. For this reason, education can never be the same for all. The school has a specific responsibility for students with functional impairments.

The school should actively and consciously further equal rights and opportunities for women and men. Students should be encouraged to develop their interests without prejudice to gender differences.

Rights and obligations

It is not in itself sufficient that education imparts knowledge of fundamental democratic values. It must also be carried out using democratic working methods and develop the students' ability and willingness to take personal responsibility and participate actively in societal life. Opportunities for students to exercise influence over their education and take responsibility for their studies requires that the school clarifies the goals of education, its contents and working forms, as well as the rights and obligations that students have.

Tasks of the school

The main tasks of the upper secondary school are to impart knowledge and to create the preconditions for students to acquire and develop their knowledge. Education should support the development of students into responsible persons who actively participate in and contribute to professional and societal life. It should contribute to the all-round development of the students.

The school has the task of passing on values to students, imparting knowledge and preparing them to work and participate actively in society. The school should impart the more unvarying forms of knowledge that constitute the common frame of reference in society that is based on fundamental democratic values and the human rights we all share. Students should also be able to orient themselves in a complex reality with its enormous flows of information and a rapidly changing world. The ability of students to find, acquire and apply new knowledge thus becomes important. Students should develop their ability to think critically, examine facts and relationships, and appreciate the consequences of different alternatives. By these means students will come closer to scientific ways of thinking and working.

Through studies students should strengthen their foundations for lifelong learning. Changes in working life, new technologies, internationalisation and the complexities of environmental issues impose new demands on people's knowledge and ways of working. The school should stimulate students' creativity, curiosity and self-confidence, as well as their desire to explore and transform new ideas into action, and find solutions to

problems. Students should develop their ability to take initiatives and responsibility, and to work both independently and together with others. The school should contribute to students developing knowledge and attitudes that promote entrepreneurship, enterprise and innovative thinking. As a result the opportunities for students to start and run a business will increase. Entrepreneurial skills are valuable in working and societal life and for further studies. In addition, the school should develop the social and communicative competence of students, and also their awareness of health, life style and consumer issues. The school should also aim to ensure that students have the opportunity of regularly carrying out physical activities.

Developments in working life mean, inter alia, that traditional boundaries between different vocational areas need to be reduced, and that demands are imposed on awareness of not only one's own competence, but also that of others. This in its turn imposes demands on the school's working forms and organisation.

Ethical perspectives are of importance for many of the issues that are taken up in education. For this reason education in different subjects should cover these perspectives and provide students with a foundation for and support their ability to develop personal views.

Environmental perspectives in education should provide students with insights so that they can not only contribute to preventing harmful environmental effects, but also develop a personal approach to overarching, global environmental issues. Education should illuminate how the functions of society and our ways of living and working can best be adapted to create sustainable development.

An international perspective is important to be able to understand one's own reality in a global context and in order to create international solidarity. Teaching in different subjects should give students knowledge of the European Union and its importance for Sweden, as well as prepare them for a society that will have closer cross-cultural and cross-border contacts. Having an international perspective should also contribute to students' developing greater understanding of cultural diversity within Sweden.

A historical perspective in teaching enables students to develop an understanding of the present, and a preparedness for the future. Education should also develop understanding of the relativity of knowledge and the ability to think in dynamic terms.

Knowledge and learning

The school's task of imparting knowledge presupposes an active discussion about concepts of knowledge, about what knowledge is important today, what will be important in the future, and also about how learning and the acquisition of knowledge take place. Different aspects of knowledge are natural starting points for such a discussion.

Knowledge is a complex, multi-faceted concept. Knowledge can be expressed in a variety of forms – as facts, understanding, skills, familiarity and accumulated experience – all of which presuppose and interact with each other. Teaching should not emphasise one aspect of knowledge at the cost of another.

Students' acquisition of knowledge is dependent on developing the ability to see interconnections. The school should enable students to gain a general and coherent view. Students should get the opportunity to reflect over their experiences and apply their knowledge.

The school cannot on its own impart all the knowledge students will need. Consequently, it is essential that the school creates the best combination of conditions for the students' education, thinking and acquisition of knowledge. In this context, the school

should make use of the knowledge and experience available in the surrounding environment, and which students have acquired from i.a. working life. The world students meet in school and the work they take part in should all help in preparing students for life after school.

All students should be stimulated to grow through tasks and opportunities to develop in accordance with their potential. All students should meet respect for their person and work. Students should become aware that new knowledge and insights are the prerequisites for personal development. A positive attitude should be created to learning, and to creating such an attitude amongst students with negative school experiences. The school should strengthen students' belief in themselves and in the future.

Each school's development

The school should strive to create flexible solutions for its organisation, range of courses and working forms.

Co-operation with the compulsory school and its variants, with universities and university colleges should be developed, as should co-operation between the upper secondary school and its equivalent for students with learning disabilities, special education for adults, tuition in Swedish for immigrants, and also municipal adult education. The school should strive for good co-operation with working life, which is important for all education in the upper secondary school, but of vital importance for the quality of vocational education. The school should also coordinate with the home as regards students' learning and development. Both the daily pedagogical leadership of the school, as well as the professional responsibility of teachers are necessary preconditions for the qualitative development of the school. School activities must be developed so that they correspond to the national goals. This requires ongoing review, follow-up and evaluation of results, as well as testing, developing and evaluating different methods.

2. Overall goals and guidelines

The overall goals set out the knowledge, as well as the norms and values that all students should have acquired by the time they complete their schooling. The goals specify the orientation of the education.

2.1 KNOWLEDGE

Goals

It is the responsibility of the school that all individual students:

- in a national vocational programme in the upper secondary school are given the opportunity of fulfilling the requirements for a vocational diploma, which means that the student has achieved a level of professional expertise accepted by the industry as providing good preparation for professional life,
- in a national higher education preparatory programme in the upper secondary school are given the opportunity to fulfil the requirements for a diploma providing eligibility for studies in higher education, which means that the student has sufficient knowledge to be well prepared for studies in higher education, or
- who have completed an introductory program have a plan for and sufficient knowledge for further education, or are equipped to enter the labour market.

It is also the responsibility of the school to ensure that each student has completed a national programme or other nationally determined education with its own diploma goals in the upper secondary school, or an introductory program as set out in the student's individual study plan,

- acquire good knowledge in the courses they have studied, and can use this knowledge for further studies, and in societal life, working life and everyday life,
- can use their knowledge as a tool to:
 - formulate, analyse, test assumptions, and solve problems,
 - reflect over their experiences and their individual ways of learning,
 - critically examine and assess statements and relationships, and
 - solve practical problems and tasks,
- can learn, explore and work independently and together with others, and feel confident in their own ability,
- can use non-fiction, fiction and other forms of culture as a source of knowledge, insight and pleasure,
- can obtain stimulation from cultural experiences and develop a feeling for aesthetic values,
- have knowledge about the preconditions for good health,
- have knowledge about and insight into the main parts of Swedish, Nordic and Western cultural heritage,
- have knowledge about human rights,
- have knowledge about the culture, language, religion and history of the national minorities (Jews, Romanies, indigenous Samis, Swedish and Tornedal Finns),

- have knowledge about societal and working life,
- satisfy the preconditions for taking part in democratic decision-making processes in societal and working life,
- have the ability to critically examine and assess what they see, hear and read in order to be able to discuss and take a view on different issues concerning life and values,
- have a knowledge of international cooperation and global relationships, and can assess events from Swedish, Nordic, European and global perspectives,
- can observe and analyse the interaction between people in their surroundings from the perspective of sustainable development, and
- can use books, library resources and modern technology as a tool in the search for knowledge, communication, creativity and learning.

Guidelines

All who work in the school should:

- provide support and stimulation for all students so that they develop as far as possible,
- be observant of and support students in need of special support, and
- cooperate in order to make the school a good environment for development and learning.

Teachers should:

- take as the starting point each individual student's needs, circumstances, experiences and thinking,
- reinforce each student's self-confidence, as well as their willingness and ability to learn,
- in the education create a balance between theoretical and practical knowledge that supports the learning of students,
- make clear the scientific foundations, assessments and perspectives that knowledge is based on, and guide students so that they can determine how knowledge can be used,
- ensure that teaching in terms of content and its organisation is typified by a gender perspective,
- stimulate, guide and support students and provide special support to students experiencing difficulties,
- cooperate with other teachers in order to achieve the goals of education,
- in the education use the knowledge and experience of work and societal life which the students have or acquire during the course of the education,
- in their teaching take account of the results of developments within the subject area, and also relevant pedagogical and other research,
- organise and carry out work so that students:
 - develop in accordance with their own preconditions and at the same time are stimulated to use and develop all their ability,
 - experience that knowledge is meaningful and that their own learning is progressing,

- receive opportunities to study subjects in greater depth, develop a frame of reference and context,
- receive support in their language and communicative development,
- gradually receive more and increasingly independent tasks to perform, as well as take greater personal responsibility, and
- receive opportunities to work along interdisciplinary lines.

2.2 NORMS AND VALUES

According to the Education Act, the education should be carried out in accordance with fundamental democratic values and human rights, covering the inviolability of people, the freedom and integrity of the individual, the equal value of all people, gender equality and solidarity between people.

The school should actively and consciously influence and stimulate students into embracing the shared values of our society, and encourage their expression in practical daily action.

Goals

The goals of the school are that all students individually:

- can consciously determine their views based on knowledge of human rights and fundamental democratic values, as well as personal experiences,
- respect the intrinsic value and integrity of other people,
- reject the subjection of people to oppression and degrading treatment, and also assist in helping people,
- can interact with other people based on respect for differences in living conditions, culture, language, religion and history,
- can empathise with and understand the situation of other people, and develop a willingness to act with their best interests at heart, and
- show respect and care for both the immediate environment, as well as the environment from a broader perspective.

Guidelines

All who work in the school should:

- contribute to developing the students' sense of belonging, solidarity, and responsibility towards people outside the immediate group,
- in their work with students work for solidarity with disadvantaged groups both inside and outside our country,
- actively promote equality of individuals and groups,
- be observant and take the necessary measures to counteract and prevent all forms of discrimination, harassment and degrading treatment, and
- show respect for the individual student and apply a democratic approach.

Teachers should:

- make clear the fundamental democratic values of Swedish society and human rights, and together with the students discuss conflicts that can occur between these values and rights and actual events,
- openly discuss and together with the students analyse different values, views and problems, and the consequences of these,
- make clear the norms and rules of the school and how these serve as a foundation for their work, and
- together with the students discuss and develop rules for working and participating in groups.

2.3 RESPONSIBILITY AND INFLUENCE OF STUDENTS

As laid down in the Education Act, students should be able to exercise influence over their education. They should be continuously encouraged to take an active part in the work of further developing the education and be kept informed of issues that concern them. Students should always have the opportunity of taking the initiative on issues that should be treated within the framework of their influence over the education.

Goals

The goals of the school are that all students individually:

- take personal responsibility for their studies and their working environment,
- actively exercise influence over their education and the internal work of the school,
- on the basis of knowledge of democratic principles further develop their ability to work in democratic ways,
- develop their willingness to actively contribute to a deeper democracy in working and societal life, and
- strengthen confidence in their own ability to individually and together with others take initiatives, take responsibility and influence their own conditions.

Guidelines

All who work in the school should:

- together with the students take responsibility for the social, cultural and physical school environment.

Teachers should:

- take as their starting point that the students are able and willing to take personal responsibility for their learning,
- ensure that all students have real influence over working methods, forms and the content of education,
- encourage students to overcome any difficulties they may experience in expressing their views,
- encourage students to try different working methods and forms, and
- together with the students plan and evaluate the education.

2.4 CHOICE OF EDUCATION – WORK AND SOCIETAL LIFE

The upper secondary school should cooperate closely with compulsory schooling, working life, universities and university colleges, and with society in general. This is required for the students to receive education of high quality, and serves as a basis for choosing courses in their education and for further studies or professional life. It is particularly important that the school cooperates with working life over vocational education.

As working life is continuously changing in terms of the need for competence and the recruitment of labour in different areas, study and vocational counselling are of great significance. Universities and university colleges, employment exchanges, industry and the partners on the labour market, and trade organisations thus all have important roles to play in providing information to schools and students.

Goals

The goals of the school are that all students individually:

- develop their self-knowledge and the ability to plan their studies,
- can consciously determine their further studies and professional orientation on the basis of their overall experiences and knowledge,
- enhance their ability to analyse different choices and assess what their consequences may be,
- are familiar with the conditions of working life, especially within their study area, as well as the opportunities for further education, work placement and work in Sweden and other countries, and
- are aware that all professional areas are changing in relation to technological development, changes in society and professional life, and greater international interdependence, and thus understand the need for personal development in their working life.

Guidelines

School staff on the basis of the distribution of work drawn up by the head-teacher should:

- provide support for students in their choice of education and profession,
- inform and guide students prior to choosing courses, further education and professional orientation, and counteract restrictions on choices that are based on stereotyped views concerning gender and social or cultural background,
- in information and guidance counselling use the knowledge that exists amongst students, school staff and in the immediate society outside the school,
- in the education use the knowledge and experience from working and societal life that students have or acquire during their education,
- develop links with universities and university colleges, as well as with supervisors and others in working life who can contribute to attaining the goals of the education,
- in the education take advantage of contacts in the local community, through its organisations in working and cultural life, and
- contribute to prospective students receiving information about the education provided by the school.

2.5 ASSESSMENT AND GRADES

Grades express the extent to which individual students have fulfilled the national knowledge requirements laid down for each course, and the goals of the diploma project.

Goals

The goals of the school are that all students individually:

- take responsibility for their learning and study results, and
- can assess their study results and need for development in relation to the requirements of the education.

Guidelines

Teachers should:

- regularly provide each student with information about their progress and the need for development in their studies,
- work together with parents and guardians, and provide information about the students' school situation and acquisition of knowledge, and
- inform students the basis on which grades are awarded.

Teachers when awarding grades should:

- use all the information available about the student's knowledge in relation to the national knowledge requirements for each course,
- also take into account the knowledge that a student has acquired outside actual teaching, and
- on the basis of the national knowledge requirements for each course make an all-round assessment of each student's knowledge.

2.6 RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HEADTEACHER

As laid down in the Education Act, pedagogical work at a school is managed and coordinated by the headteacher. The headteacher is also responsible for planning, following up, evaluating and developing the education in relation to the national goals. As both pedagogical leader of the school, and head of the teachers and other staff in the school, the headteacher is responsible for the school's results, and within specific frames, has special responsibility for ensuring that:

- the education is organised such that to the greatest extent possible, it is adapted to the wishes of students and their choice of courses, and that inappropriate choices are avoided,
- teachers adapt teaching approaches, content and working forms to the varying needs and circumstances of students,
- the working forms of the school are developed to facilitate students' active exercise of influence,
- the education is organised such that students in order to be able to search for and acquire knowledge, have access to guidance and teaching materials of high quality, and also other learning aids for a modern education where there is access to libraries, computers and other technical aids,

- the education, student welfare, study and guidance counselling are organised such that students needing special support or other remedial measures receive this,
- students receive information prior to the start of their education, obtain a coherent introduction to the education covering subjects and courses, and also receive assistance in formulating goals for their studies,
- the school in a dialogue with the student draws up an individual study plan for each student and revises this where needed,
- teachers and other staff receive opportunities to develop the competence necessary to carry out their tasks professionally,
- co-operation between teachers in different courses takes place to provide students with a context for their studies,
- co-operation with universities and university colleges, as well as working life outside the school is developed such that the students receive a high quality education, as well as preparation for professional life and further studies,
- study and guidance counselling is organised in such a way that students receive information about and guidance prior to making study choices in the school, and before choosing their future education paths and professions,
- encourage international contacts, co-operation and exchange in education,
- school staff are informed of the international agreements that Sweden has undertaken to observe in education,
- parents and guardians obtain an insight into the students' schooling,
- the school's work in knowledge areas, involving the contribution and coordination of a number of subjects forms a coherent whole for the students, and
- students receive information and knowledge about sex and human relationships, consumer and traffic issues, as well as the risks posed by tobacco, alcohol, narcotics and other drugs.

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