

# Folk High Schools in Sweden

**The Swedish Folk High School is an alternate form of adult education, established in 1868. The schools have a long tradition of providing general civic education, always emphasizing active participation by the students.**

Today there are over 150 Folk High Schools spread out all over the country. About one third of those are operated by county councils or regions and two thirds are run by various popular movements and non-governmental organisations.

The overall objective of the Swedish Folk High School is to provide general civic education. Integral to this aim is to provide not only knowledge and skills, thus raising educational standards, but also to provide experiences and social awareness leading to a broader and deeper democratic participation. Folk High Schools offer a unique opportunity to enhance each individuals personal development.

The traditional independence of the Folk High School has led to extensive educational innovation, including problem solving focused pedagogy and theme work in small groups, in which active participation by the students is emphasized. This is why Folk High Schools continue to be a necessity within the Swedish society. A certain level of interest has also been directed towards groups with special educa-

tional needs, e.g. people with short basic education, people with various disabilities and immigrants.

The Folk High Schools are monitored and evaluated in accordance with the provisions of a special ordinance for non-formal adult education. This is done by the Swedish National Council of Adult Education, a non-profit association with certain authoritative tasks, delegated by the government and the parliament. The Council also distribute the state grants to the Folk High Schools.

## **GENERAL COURSES - a way to qualify for higher education and higher voca- tional education**

All Folk High Schools hold general courses, suitable for those who have not completed their secondary education. The subjects studied there closely resemble those in comprehensive schools or upper secondary schools; however, a different approach may be adopted.

There is no centrally established curriculum, as each school determines its own programme. At the same time, the content of the course will cover a wide spectrum of subjects and a variety of optional subjects is usually offered. The participants study from one to three years depending on their previous

educational background. The lowest age of admission is normally 18 years old.

The general courses at the Folk High Schools have been ascribed a specific level of qualification by the government and The Swedish Council for Higher Education and The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education. These courses may be equated with the upper secondary school, which means that participants may qualify for higher education and university studies through a certificate verifying the participants' knowledge – Certificate: Eligibility for Higher Education and Higher Vocational Education. For more information about the requirements regarding the qualification and the certificate, see overleaf.

## **SPECIAL COURSES - a way to deepen your interests**

Folk High Schools also offer a wide range of courses with a special emphasis. Students may choose from e.g. aesthetic subjects, music, theatre, art and design, athletics, environmental studies, or subjects relating to developing countries. A few courses are vocational, such as journalist training and youth recreation leader programmes. The special courses can be studied at various levels, some of which are equivalent to university/college level.

# Explanation of certificate

## Eligibility for higher education and higher vocational education

### **Basic eligibility for higher education and higher vocational education attained at Folk High School**

Basic competence acquired at a Folk High School:

1. The study duration criterion can be met by fulfilling one of the following options:

- three years at Folk High School; *or*
- two years at Folk High School as a supplement to at least one year of study at upper secondary school level; *or*
- two years at Folk High School as a supplement after compulsory school and at least one year's work experience; *or*
- one year at Folk High School as a supplement to at least two years of study at upper secondary school level.

2a. The content criterion to Higher Education can be met by acquiring knowledge corresponding to at least the grade Pass in the following ten (10) upper secondary school subjects:

- Swedish 1, 2 and 3 alternatively Swedish as a second language 1, 2 and 3
- English 5 and 6
- Mathematics 1a, b or c
- History 1a1
- Science studies 1a1
- Religion 1
- Social studies 1a1

2b. The content criterion to Higher Vocational Education can be met by acquiring knowledge corresponding to at least the grade Pass in the following seven (7) upper secondary school subjects:

- Swedish 1 alternatively Swedish as a second language 1
- English 5
- Mathematics 1a, b or c
- History 1a1
- Science studies 1a1
- Religion 1
- Social studies 1a1

These subjects can be completed either at a Folk High School or at an alternative educational institution.

### **Study assessment achieved at Folk High School**

Students who so wish may be given an overall assessment of their skills for studies. This assessment is an appraisal of the student's scholastic capabilities as a whole and is based on the assessments of all teaching staff.

The following grades are used:

- Excellent study skills (4)
- Very good - Excellent study skills (3,5)
- Very good study skills (3)
- Good - Very good study skills (2,5)
- Good study skills (2)
- Poor - Good study skills (1,5)
- Poor study skills (1)

The following factors are considered when making the assessment:

- Knowledge and skills and development of these
- Capacity for analysis, processing, and overview
- Ambition, endurance and capacity to organise studies
- Social skills

In order to facilitate the assessment, the Swedish National Council of Adult Education has drawn up certain guidelines. The guidelines specify the criteria applicable for the assessment 'Excellent study skills', 'Very good study skills' and 'Good study skills'. The average of the study assessments set by the school during an academic year shall lie within the interval 2.7 plus/minus 5 %. The average is computed based on the numerical values stated above for the respective steps in the scale.

Read more about the criteria on the next page »

# Criteria

Based on the following assessment criteria, each school should decide on what grounds to base their evaluation for the different levels of Excellent, Very Good and Good. The criteria are listed for each of the four key factors which should be taken into consideration.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND PROFIECIENCY SKILLS AND DEVELOPMENT THEREOF**

<b>EXCELLENT STUDY CAPACITY</b>	<b>VERY GOOD STUDY CAPACITY</b>	<b>GOOD STUDY CAPACITY</b>
The student	The student	The student
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• is actively and independently searching for new knowledge leading to a broader as well as deeper understanding and insight</li><li>• applies their knowledge and skills and is capable of relating these to their own experience and new situations</li><li>• integrates knowledge and skills from various fields</li><li>• accounts for their knowledge and skills in a lucid, nuanced and varied way</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• is actively searching, with some support, for new knowledge leading to increased understanding and insight</li><li>• applies their knowledge and skills and is capable of relating these to their own experience and new situations</li><li>• integrates, with some support, knowledge and skills from various fields</li><li>• accounts for this knowledge and skills in a lucid and structured way</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• is searching, with support, for new knowledge leading to some understanding and insight</li><li>• applies their knowledge and skills in a given context and is capable of relating these to their own experience</li><li>• is able to integrate, with support, knowledge and skills from various fields</li><li>• accounts for this knowledge and skills in written and verbal form</li></ul>

## **ANALYTICAL SKILLS, PROCESSING AND OVERVIEW**

<b>EXCELLENT STUDY CAPACITY</b>	<b>VERY GOOD STUDY CAPACITY</b>	<b>GOOD STUDY CAPACITY</b>
The student	The student	The student
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• searches for, processes and conveys information from different sources with a critical mindset</li><li>• recognises and understands the relationship between context and modules when creating their own knowledge</li><li>• uses concepts, models and theories to describe and explain different processes and phenomena</li><li>• demonstrates flexibility and openness to new ways of problemsolving and applies the same</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• searches for, critically processes and conveys information from different sources</li><li>• recognises and understands the relationship between context and modules</li><li>• uses concepts and models to describe and explain different processes and phenomena</li><li>• demonstrates openness to new ways of problem-solving</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• searches for, processes with support, and conveys information from different sources</li><li>• recognises and understands the relationship between context and modules in basic structures</li><li>• is able to use concepts to describe different processes and phenomena</li><li>• is able to recount and apply established forms of problem-solving</li></ul>

# AMBITION, DILIGENCE AND ORGANISING SKILLS

## EXCELLENT STUDY CAPACITY

The student

- takes responsibility for their learning and is working toward extending and developing their knowledge and skills
- is working independently and actively both with and without supervision
- partakes with dedication in individual as well as group work
- plans, executes, and follows through on agreed assignments, individually as well as in a group

## VERY GOOD STUDY CAPACITY

The student

- takes responsibility for their learning and is working toward extending their knowledge and skills
- is working independently both with and without supervision
- participates actively in individual as well as group work
- plans, executes and follows through on agreed assignments, individually as well as in a group

## GOOD STUDY CAPACITY

The student

- is working toward extending their knowledge and skills
- is working, with support, with a variety of assignments
- partakes in individual as well as team work
- is working on agreed assignments, individually as well as in a group

# SOCIAL SKILLS

## EXCELLENT STUDY CAPACITY

The student

- plays an active part in different groups and in common activities
- takes responsibility for the unity of the group, a positive working environment and good relations
- shows understanding and respect for, as well as takes the initiative to improving, joint agreements of the forms of social interaction in a school setting
- respects the equal value of all as well as the individual's right to privacy

## VERY GOOD STUDY CAPACITY

The student

- participates in different groups and in common activities
- contributes to the unity of the group, a positive working environment and good relations
- shows understanding and respect for joint agreements of the forms of social interaction in a school setting
- respects the equal value of all as well as the individual's right to privacy

## GOOD STUDY CAPACITY

The student

- partakes in different groups and in common activities
- contributes to some extent to the unity of the group and good relations
- shows respect for joint agreements of the forms of social interaction in a school setting
- respects the equal value of all as well as the individual's right to privacy

## MORE INFORMATION

**[www.folkhogskola.nu](http://www.folkhogskola.nu)**  
The Information Service of the Swedish Folk High Schools

**[www.folkbildningsradet.se](http://www.folkbildningsradet.se)**  
The Swedish National Council of Adult Education

**[www.uhr.se](http://www.uhr.se)**  
The Swedish Council for Higher Education

**[www.myh.se](http://www.myh.se)**  
The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education