

**UK 066/929**

CURRICULUM FOR THE  
JOINT MASTER'S PROGRAMME IN  
**COMPARATIVE SOCIAL  
POLICY AND WELFARE.**



organised jointly with Tampere University (Finland)  
(in English)



**JOHANNES KEPLER  
UNIVERSITY LINZ**

# Contents

§ 1 Aims and Profile of Qualifications . . . . .	3
§ 2 Admission . . . . .	4
§ 3 Structure . . . . .	4
§ 4 Mandatory Subjects/Modules . . . . .	5
§ 5 Lectures . . . . .	5
§ 6 Master's Thesis . . . . .	6
§ 7 Examination Regulations . . . . .	6
§ 8 Academic Degree . . . . .	7
§ 9 Implementation . . . . .	7
§ 10 Transitional Regulations . . . . .	7

## § 1 Aims and Profile of Qualifications

(1) The Joint Master's Programme in Comparative Social Policy and Welfare has been designed to supplement students' academic credentials and enhance professional career prospects as highly qualified analysts and applied researchers within national, European or international social policy organisations in the areas of welfare management and social policy development. Graduates will be able to apply acquired skills in support of evaluating social programmes. Students will have an opportunity to acquire expertise in an academic environment designed to encourage challenging ideas as well as both critical and creative thinking with regard to contemporary welfare issues and social policies currently in place within various European countries. The programme can strongly benefit experts and experienced professionals in the field who wish to continue academic studies as well as strengthen and update professional expertise in this field.

### (1.1) Programme Objectives

Educational objectives in the field of social science studies include (but are not limited to):

- a) Understanding the European dimension of social policy and welfare.
- b) The ability to engage in open and critical examination comparing fields of social policy and welfare.
- c) Expertise in understanding theories of social policy and welfare.
- d) Acquiring information and understanding how to successfully apply and conduct research in fields of social policy and welfare in countries with different welfare systems.
- e) Knowledge and understanding of methodology and sociological research methods.
- f) Knowledge and understanding of comparative and interdisciplinary welfare and social policy research and social data research.
- g) Intercultural competence skills.
- h) The ability to express oneself clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing in order to develop, complete and defend academic papers and participate in lectures.
- i) The ability to meet various professional demands in the fields of social policy, welfare, social and welfare statistics, social security systems, labour policy, poverty, gender studies, etc.
- j) To support academic mobility and job opportunities for social policy experts in Europe throughout the programme.

In addition, the programme supports strong proficiency in English.

(1.2) Professional fields and programme relevance for the labour market and further academic study

Potential career opportunities: professions in the field of social sciences; social research and analysis, NGO and NPO sectors; the public sector; European and international institutions; publishing; the cultural sector; international co-operation; and preparation for further graduate study.

### (2) Concept for the Joint Master's Programme

The curriculum for the Master's degree programme is jointly designed by two partner universities: Johannes Kepler University Linz (Austria) and Tampere University (Finland).

## **§ 2 Admission**

(1) In compliance with § 54 para. 1 of the Universities Act, the Joint Master's Programme in Comparative Social Policy and Welfare is part of the area of Social and Economic Sciences and is taught in English.

(2) The designated partner university refers to each university participating in the Joint Master's Programme in Comparative Social Policy and Welfare: Tampere University and Johannes Kepler University Linz. The designated home university refers to each student's home university where the student was first enrolled. Admission to the Joint Master's Programme in Comparative Social Policy and Welfare requires official admission to study at both partner universities.

(3) Admission to the Master's degree programme requires the successful completion of a Bachelor's degree programme in Social Policy, Social Work, Political Science or an equivalent degree in one of the Social Sciences (Bachelor or Master's degree or Diploma degree programme). An undergraduate level background of university studies at the Bachelor's degree level in the area of social policy/welfare and qualitative/quantitative methods is required.

(4) Successful completion of a Bachelor's degree in Sociology or Social Economics at the Johannes Kepler University Linz meets the prerequisites for admission to the Joint Master's Programme in Comparative Social Policy and Welfare in any case.

(5) Applicants who successfully fulfil the admission requirements may apply for admission to the Joint Master's Programme of Comparative Social Policy and Welfare at one of the partner universities. Admission will be based on the applicant's educational background and strong proficiency in English. Applicants must submit certificates of English courses taken (level C1 or C2) or must submit an equivalent score from one of the following tests: TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or IELTS (International English Language Testing System).

(6) As the admission procedure is organised jointly with each partner university, the number of university spots is limited, and each university will apply the admission criteria correspondingly. Admission requirements are stated in the joint agreement. Students will be asked to submit the following: the completed application form, a letter of motivation, a current curriculum vitae, certificates (in the original and translated into German or English), proof of proficiency in English (certificates from English language courses level C1 or C2 or TOEFL - Test of English as a Foreign Language - or IELTS - International English Language Testing System - scores), and a photocopy of the ID page in the applicant's passport.

(7) Registration and tuition fees will be regulated and charged by the students' home university. Students from the partner universities enrolled in the programme are required to pay the Austrian Student Union fee at the Johannes Kepler University Linz.

## **§ 3 Structure**

(1) The Master's programme comprises 120 ECTS credits and corresponds to a period of study of four semesters, or two years, in compliance with the corresponding regulations determined by governing partner institutions.

The ECTS credits are distributed among the following subjects:

Mandatory Subjects / Modules	75 ECTS Credits
Master's Thesis	30 ECTS Credits
Master's Thesis Seminar	10 ECTS Credits
Internship / Practicum	5 ECTS Credits
<b>Total:</b>	<b>120 ECTS Credits</b>

(2) The recommended course schedule to complete the programme is shown in annex 1 (part 1/part 2). The programme is – with certain restrictions – suitable for students with professional duties or supervision obligations. All courses are offered in digital form, and personal attendance is only required for the intensive programs (maximally two weeks) in the beginning of the semester. Digital meetings with mandatory attendance are communicated in the beginning of the semester. Exams are administered digitally, and the vast majority does not require attendance at a specific time.

## § 4 Mandatory Subjects/Modules

(1) The following subjects have to be completed successfully:

Code	Name	ECTS
929CACS20	Conceptual Approaches to the Comparative Study of Welfare Production	20
929NSWS20	National Systems of Welfare and Society	15
929ERME20	Empirical Research Methodology	15
929ELCL20	Elective Classes on Well-Being and Welfare Production in a Globalizing World	20
929PRAC20	Practicum / Internship	5
929AWRI20	Academic Writing	5

(2) Practicum / Internship

Each student is required to complete an internship / practicum at an EU institution or (European) NGO / NPO or another organisation engaged in fields related to the Joint Master's degree programme. In accordance with the programme and upon approval by the university, the student may complete his/her practical training at a working organisation of his/her choice.

## § 5 Lectures

(1) Formal Programme

1. The Joint Master's Programme in Comparative Social Policy and Welfare has been designed in accordance with the corresponding regulations of the governing partner institutions. Each partner university's regulations apply to the joint degree programme.
2. The names and the types of all courses at JKU as well as their ECTS points, their duration in hours per week, their codes, their registration requirements and their admission procedures (in case of limited availability of places) are described in the study handbook of JKU ([studienhandbuch.jku.at](http://studienhandbuch.jku.at)). The possible types of courses as well as the examination regulations are described in §§ 13 und 14 of the JKU statute (Section "Studienrecht").

## (2) Educational Methods

The online learning environment is Tampere University's Moodle platform. In addition to distance learning classes, partner universities will jointly conduct intensive programmes each semester which will take place at one of the partner universities.

## **§ 6 Master's Thesis**

(1) Students are required to select a thesis supervisor, officially submit a Master's thesis topic, and submit a Master's thesis to the home university. Students may opt to complete a thesis under the supervision of a second advisor from the partner university.

(2) Students may opt to select one of the following areas for the Master's thesis: Conceptual Approaches to the Comparative Study of Welfare Production, National Systems of Welfare and Society, or Elective Classes on Well-Being and Welfare Production in a Globalizing World. In compliance with the content of the Joint Master's programme, the topic should include a comparative perspective and focus on a field in welfare and social policy. In consultation with a thesis supervisor, students are advised to select a Master's thesis topic by the end of the second semester.

(3) The Master's thesis is worth 40 ECTS credits (30 ECTS credits for the Master's thesis and 10 ECTS credits for the Master's thesis seminar).

(4) The Master's thesis will affirm that the student has acquired the ability to work independently and address scientific questions and issues. The thesis should reflect the student's capacity to conduct independent study and research.

## **§ 7 Examination Regulations**

### (1) Examination Methods

Grading will be determined by numerous methods including written and oral examinations given in accordance to corresponding stipulations governing partner institutions. For examinations at the partner universities the examination regulations of each partner university apply. The regulations for subject examinations and course examinations at JKU are described in the study handbook of JKU.

### (2) Master's Degree Examination

The Master's degree programme will be determined as successfully completed after all required subjects - including the Master's thesis seminar and the Master's thesis - have been successfully passed.

### (3) Grading

The national grading system, in accordance with the international grading system, will be used to assess and evaluate academic work completed and submitted by students (transcription enclosed; annex 2).

## § 8 Academic Degree

(1) Upon successful completion of the Master's degree programme, students enrolled in the programme will be awarded the following academic title by the student's home university:

Finland	Master of Social Sciences (M.Soc.Sc.)
Austria	Master of Social Sciences (MSSc)

(2) Students will be awarded a Master's degree (certificate/diploma) and a diploma supplement by his or her home university in compliance with corresponding national legislation in effect at that university. The certificate has to express that the Master's programme in Comparative Social Policy and Welfare is a joint study programme of the Johannes Kepler University and Tampere University (Finland).

## § 9 Implementation

(1) This curriculum comes into effect on October 1, 2020.

(2) The curriculum for the Joint Master's programme in Comparative Social Policy and Welfare in the version published in the official newsletter of Johannes Kepler University Linz on June 23, 2017, 33<sup>rd</sup> piece, item 252, expires by the end of September 30, 2020, unless otherwise specified below.

(3) § 3 para. 2 as published in the official newsletter of the Johannes Kepler University Linz on May 18, 2021, 23<sup>rd</sup> piece, item 308 will take effect on October 1, 2021.

(4) Annex 1, part 1 as published in the official newsletter of the Johannes Kepler University Linz on May 21, 2024, 24<sup>th</sup> piece, item 392 will take effect on October 1, 2024.

## § 10 Transitional Regulations

Students already enrolled in the Master's programme under the 2014 regulations of the curriculum in the currently valid version as before October 1, 2020 are entitled to complete the programme according to the current regulations until November 13, 2021.

## Annex 1, part 2: Ideal-Typical Course of Studies

	1st semester W even year		2nd semester S uneven year		3rd semester W uneven year		4th semester S even year		
	Course	ECTS	Course	ECTS	Course	ECTS	Course	ECTS	
<b>C: Theory</b>	C1	5	C2 C3	5 5	C4*	5			20
<b>N: Empirics</b>	N1 N2 N3	5 5 5							15
<b>M: Methods</b>	M1	5	M2 M3	5 5					15
<b>E: Electives</b>	E2	5	E <sub>x</sub> *	5	E <sub>x</sub>	5	E <sub>x</sub>	5	20
<b>P: Praxis</b>					P	5			5
<b>W: Writing</b>					W1	2	W2	3	5
<b>MT: Thesis</b>			MT	5	MTS	10	MT	25	40
		30		30		27		33	<b>Sum 120</b>

\* C4 may be offered in the second semester, in which case one of the elective classes will move to the third semester



Annex 1, part 1: Curriculum: Sections and Classes

			ECTS	Offered by:
Mandatory: Theory	<b>C</b>	<b>Conceptual Approaches to the Comparative Study of Welfare Production</b>	<b>20</b>	
	C1	Introduction to the Study of the Politics of Welfare Production	5	JKU
	C2	Welfare State Theories	5	JKU
	C3	Concepts and Comparisons in Social Policy Research	5	JKU
	C4	Global Social Policy	5	JKU
Mandatory: Empirics	<b>N</b>	<b>National Systems of Welfare and Society</b>	<b>15</b>	
	N1	Nordic Welfare Societies	5	TAU
	N2	The Continental European Model of Social Protection	5	JKU
	N3	The Liberal Welfare State	5	JKU
Mandatory: Methods	<b>M</b>	<b>Empirical Research Methodology</b>	<b>15</b>	
	M1	Introduction to the Methodology of Social and Comparative Research (independent study)	5	TAU
	M2	Quantitative Research Methods	5	TAU
	M3	Qualitative Research Methods	5	TAU
Electives: Context and Special Issues	<b>E</b>	<b>Elective Classes on Well-Being and Welfare Production in a Globalizing World</b>	<b>20</b>	
	E1	Political Dynamics in Select Social Policy Fields <sup>1</sup>	5	JKU
	E2	Work, Employment, Welfare	5	TAU
	E3	Gender, Care and Society <sup>2</sup>	5	TAU
	E4	International Development Studies <sup>2</sup>	5	TAU
	E5	Sustainable Development in a Global Society <sup>2</sup>	5	TAU
	E6	Optional Studies <sup>3</sup>	5	JKU/TAU
Praxis	<b>P</b>	<b>Practicum / Internship</b>	<b>5</b>	
	P	Seminar for the Practicum	5	JKU/TAU
Academic Writing	<b>W</b>	<b>Academic Writing</b>	<b>5</b>	
	W1	Academic Writing (a)	2	JKU/TAU
	W2	Academic Writing (b)	3	JKU/TAU
MA- Thesis	<b>MT</b>	<b>Master's Thesis</b>	<b>40</b>	
	MTS	Master's Thesis Seminar	10	JKU/TAU
	MT	Master's Thesis	30	JKU/TAU
<b>Sum ECTS</b>			<b>120</b>	

<sup>1</sup> The specific substantive issue area of this class is variable, and JKU will publish a description detailing its contents in the semester prior to the one in which it is offered.

<sup>2</sup> Students can choose a specific class under this heading from a pool offered in Tampere University's Global Societies Program.

<sup>3</sup> Classes from the partner universities' other programs or classes from other universities can be chosen here. Classes must be MA-level, and they must be substantively suitable in the context of the COSOPO programme. Approval by the programme director is required.

## Annex 2: Grading Systems

The international grading system is used for the assessment of the workload achieved by the students

ECTS Grade	Definition (D)	Definition (E)	Equivalent Finland	Equivalent Austria
A	ausgezeichnete Leistungen und nur wenige unbedeutende Fehler	outstanding performance with only minor errors	5	(1) sehr gut
B	überdurchschnittliche Leistungen, aber einige Fehler	above the average standard but with some errors	4	(2) gut
C	insgesamt gute und solide Arbeit, jedoch mit einigen grundlegenden Fehlern	generally sound work with a number of notable errors	3	(3) befriedigend
D	mittelmäßig, jedoch deutliche Mängel	fair but with significant shortcomings	2	(4) genügend
E	die gezeigten Leistungen entsprechen den Mindestanforderungen	performance meets the minimum criteria	1	(4) genügend
F	es sind erhebliche Verbesserungen erforderlich	considerable further work is required	hylätty	(5) nicht genügend