

Handlingsplan för masterprogrammen i textilt management

Följande handlingsplan berör Magisterprogrammet i textilt management (AMATM), Mastersprogrammet i fashion management och marknadsföring (AMFMM/TMFMM) och Mastersprogrammet i styrning av textila värdekedjor (AMSTV).

Bakgrund

Under våren 2021 har Magisterprogrammet i textilt management (AMATM) och Mastersprogrammet i fashion management och marknadsföring (AMFMM) samt Mastersprogrammet i styrning av textila värdekedjor (AMSTV) vid Högskolan i Borås, genomgått en lokal granskning som en del i högskolans kvalitetssäkringssystem för utbildning. En bedömargrupp bestående av externa och interna ledamöter har utfört granskningen enligt handläggningsordning för utvärdering av utbildning vid Högskolan i Borås.

Under granskningsprocessen har alla tre utbildningsplaner genomgått en större revidering som godkänts av FOU-nämnden. I samband med denna ändrades koden på Mastersprogrammet i fashion management och marknadsföring från AMFMM till TMFMM.

Granskningen har resulterat i en rapport (Dnr 816-19, 817-19, 818-19) från den externa bedömargruppen, baserad på en självvärderingsrapport av aktuell utbildning (Dnr 286-19), ett urval av examensarbeten, samt en audit som bestående av intervjuer med lärare, studenter och verksamhetsansvariga. Bedömargruppens rapport överlämnades till verksamhetsansvariga och FoU-nämnden i oktober 2020. Utifrån bedömargruppens avrapportering, som innehåller såväl synpunkter på utbildningarna som förslag till åtgärder, har sektionsledningen lämnat över till programansvariga och studierektor att ta fram en handlingsplan med åtgärder för att stärka kvaliteten.

Handlingsplanen nedan innehåller en lista över planerade åtgärder som är kopplade till de synpunkter som bedömargruppen hade om utbildningarnas kvalitet, enligt följande

1. Upprättande/genomförande av åtgärder som skall genomföras i verksamheten, inklusive redan initierade åtgärder (**Actions**)
2. Beslut om vilken status aktiviteten har i termer av förväntat startdatum/pågående/avslutad (**Time frame/status**)
3. Beslut om ansvarig för operationalisering av aktivitet (**In charge**)
4. Beslut om ansvarig för uppföljning (**Follow-up**)
5. Upprättande av tidsplan för när dessa effekter kan antas vara möjliga att se (**In effect**)

Handlingsplanen är framtagen av programansvariga (Jenny Balkow, Olga Chkanikova och Hanna Wittrock) i samarbete med studierektor (Daniel Hjelmgren) och innehållet har diskuterats med flera lärare involverade i programmen, bland annat på metodkursen och uppsatskursen. Handlingsplanens innehåll har även diskuterats med sektionschef, andra programansvariga och har spridits till alla i kollegiet som har velat ta del av den och getts möjlighet att återkomma med synpunkter. **För att underlätta detta arbete är handlingsplanen på engelska då delar av kollegiet inte har svenska som modersmål.**

Granskade kvalitetskriterier för magister- och masterutbildningarna (Quality criteria for the audit**)**

Kriterium 1.** Utbildningen håller hög kvalitet inom huvudområdet avseende vetenskaplig bredd och djup samt beprövad erfarenhet. **The program demonstrates high quality within the main subject area regarding scientific breadth and depth as well as experience.

Kriterium 2.** Utbildningens utformning, innehåll och genomförande ger studenterna förutsättningar att nå examensmålen. **The structure, contents and implementation of the program offers students good opportunities to reach the goals and aims of the program.

Kriterium 3.** Studenternas utbildning och utbildningsmiljö... **The students' education and learning context/environment ...

Aspekt a:** har en nära koppling till forskning och **has a close connection to research, and

Aspekt b:** beaktar jämställdhet **considers equality issue

*Vidare främjas under utbildningen... **Further, the following aspects are encouraged within the program...***

Aspekt c:** internationalisering **internationalisation

Aspekt d:** hållbar utveckling **sustainability

Aspekt e: samverkan med arbetsliv och omgivande samhälle *cooperation with professions and society*

Kriterium 4. Det sker ett kontinuerligt uppföljnings- och utvecklingsarbete som inbegriper ett aktivt studentinflytande för att stärka utbildningens kvalitet. *A continuous process for quality assessment and development that includes active student influence, is in place to strengthen the quality of the education.*

Summary and discussion of comments from the audit (Sammanfattning och diskussion kring bedömargruppens synpunkter)

The audit group noted a lot of similarities between the program syllabuses that made it difficult for students to see the major differences between the programs without studying the list of the courses in detail. This was further manifested by the fact that, though the audit group produced three reports (one for each program), the reports are very similar in terms of content. Each report provides a brief summary of each of the four quality criteria, mainly based on the review of the theses and students' oral feedback during group audit interview, and concludes with a number of suggestions for improvements in bullet points. The strong focus on the theses and students' oral feedback, results in a rather repetitive report where the same problems are addressed under more than one heading (such as suggestion to introduce/use more quantitative methods).

In order to respond to comments from the audit group in a structured and detailed way, this action plan starts with a numbered list of suggested improvements that to a large extent are common to all three programs. They are a direct translation from the bullet points in the audit reports. The three final points in the list of suggested improvements (see below) are only referred to in the audit report for the Masters Programme (One-Year) in Textile Management (AMATM), whereas point number four is only listed in the audit reports for the two-year programs. Considering that the fundamental audit comments are very similar to all three programs, the program managers and director of studies concluded that there is no reason to produce three separate action plan reports. Planned actions to respond to audit results are to be implemented in all three programs in order to strengthen the quality of education within each program.

Main suggestions for improvements by the audit group

1. The audit group notes that there is an imbalance in resources between the research/teaching teams of the two specializations (i.e. value chain management and fashion management). They suggest that management should make an inventory of both resources and pedagogical development within the teaching teams. **(Criteria 2 – structure, content and implementation to support achievement of program goals)**
2. The audit group suggests that management should appoint someone to be the main coordinator of the three programs to ensure better collaboration between the managers of each program. The students feel that many similarities between the three programs rather point towards one major program in TM with specializations in respective areas of textile value chain management and fashion management. **(Criteria 2 - structure, content and implementation to support achievement of program goals)**
3. According to the audit group feedback, the overall structure and contents of the programs must be further clarified and niched so that the students are able to understand what they can expect from each program. **(Criteria 1 – scientific breadth, depth and experience in the main subject area)**
4. The audit group suggests to clarify progression between bachelor's and master's levels within textile management **(Criteria 1 – scientific breadth, depth and experience in the main subject area)**
5. Based on the audit results, it is advised to broaden the education in terms of methods. The audit group suggests that with deeper knowledge in statistical analyses the students would be able to test hypotheses, which the audit group feels would contribute further to the robust scientific quality and research connection, especially in the value chain management field. **(Criteria 1 – scientific breadth, depth and experience in the main subject area)**
6. Based on consideration of how The Swedish School of Textiles is presented as a prominent research and educational institution, the audit group suggests that the textile management scientific field should be further strengthened by inclusion of an additional professor in Textile Management. **(Criteria 2 – structure, content and implementation to support achievement of program goals)**
7. The auditing group recommends to find ways to further encourage students to fill in the course and program evaluations. The low response rate for course evaluations was particularly noticed for the 2nd year students. If surveys are not enough, other means of retrieving information should be considered, e.g. interviews. **(Criteria 4 – continuous process of quality assessment and development accounting for students influence/feedback)**

8. Based on results of audits, it is advised to further help students to develop their ability to motivate and position their studies in relation to other studies, and discuss their results in relation to current research. Clarifying the lowest level for passing grade and making sure that all students that pass reach this level is recommended. **(Criteria 1 - scientific breadth, depth and experience in the main subject area)**
9. In relation to previous suggestion, it is advised to communicate clearer guidelines for the thesis evaluation so that the students follow established quality criteria. It is further recommended to provide information to the students about how many hours of tuition they are entitled to. **(Criteria 1 - scientific breadth, depth and experience in the main subject area)**
10. The audit group encourages strengthening the program connection to professional context. In particular, it is suggested to clarify possible career opportunities that students can expect after graduation in relation to previously acquired knowledge/competences. An extended alumni organization could be beneficial in this work to support mapping out where students find employment after graduation. It is also recommended to make a review of entry requirements as well as the target group of students that the program is marketed to. **(Criteria3e – the program should encourage cooperation with professions and society)**

Below, you find a more detailed summary of feedback/recommendations for program related improvements spread throughout the audit report is presented. It is structured by authors of this report in relation to quality criteria which formed the basis of program evaluation.

Criteria 1: Scientific breadth, depth and experience in the main subject area of textile management

Audit comments on criteria 1 are divided into two parts – one that concerns discussions regarding Textile Management (TM) as scientific field of study, and the other part concerning the scientific depth and breadth of the TM subject area as demonstrated by students' theses. As put forward in the audit report the difference between the programs is not evident in the program syllabuses. Thus, the course syllabuses require revision to **clarify the difference between programs (a)**. Along with this, the audit group also notes that there is a need to **clarify progression between bachelor's level and master's level programs in Textile Management (b)**. Although the audit group feels confident in the definition of textile management per se, the audit group suggests that efforts could be made to **further clarify the scope and specializations of textile management to the students (c)**. All three suggestions are first of all about communication with the students – through program and course syllabuses, through marketing activities and through

communication throughout the program. Since the first suggestion regarding revision of program syllabus was evident already in preparation for the audit, new program syllabuses were presented to the FOU in June 2020 and are now in effect for the new students' enrollment in Fall 2021.

Concerning the scientific depth and breadth of the TM subject area as demonstrated by students' theses, the audit report generally finds the majority of theses to be of good quality. In particular, two Textile Value Chain Management theses that were included in evaluation (out of nine theses in total reviewed by auditing group) were considered as "well designed and well executed indicating that program creates good opportunities for achieving examination/program learning goals". However, three (out of totally nine) theses were identified as very weak. The one-year TM master's theses were pointed out to have lower quality than the rest (see points eight and nine above). The main critique concerned: limited theoretical connection, limited understanding of the nature of qualitative research (evident via how students write up their final chapter and make generalizations that are beyond the scope of their study), coherence between method and theory not described well enough and thus the choice of method is not argued well enough. It was also noted that in some of the one-year master's theses the focus on practical problems made it difficult to assess the scientific depth. The audit group suggested clearer guidelines for the students, though since these have been available to students for quite some time the PM and DS concludes that the main problem might be the enforcement of these, as suggested under point eight in the list above. The thesis manual is the same for all three programs, but it is important **to clarify the minimum quality expectations on the grade 'pass' for the theses** (a), **clarify what can be expected from tuition in terms of hours** (b) and above all, **to make sure that all theses that pass upholds the minimum quality expectations** (c). Efforts should also be made to **help students develop their ability to motivate and position their studies in relation to other studies** (d) and **discuss results in relation to current research** (e). It should be noted that the scope of a one-year program offers only limited opportunities for practicing this. Students of the two-year programs, practice all of this on an individual level in the course Field study in Textile management which is set as pre-requisites for the two-year thesis course.

There seemed to be a very strong opinion within the audit group in favor of students working with quantitative methods (and surveys in particular) in their theses (see point five in the list above). This topic spurred a discussion within the textile management team. The course in methods in the programs already devotes half of its contents to quantitative methods and a number of courses within the program includes application and discussion on quantitative methods already. Thus, there is a number of concerns that

needs to be addressed in relation to this. First, and most importantly, to encourage students to use statistical methods without sufficient knowledge about statistical methods would most likely result in very descriptive theses with little depth. A course in statistical analysis is not a pre-requisite for these programs and it is not included in bachelor's degrees of approximately half of the students admitted. Even if we try to include statistical methods in the existing courses to a greater extent it is unlikely that they would be able to reach sufficient expertise. At the same time, there is no room for a course in statistical methods within the scope of the programs. Second, the perspectives and theories used within textile management that constitutes the major subject area of the three programs (i.e. fashion management and supply chain management) rests on a foundation of more qualitatively oriented methods. This in turn will, despite efforts to the contrary, make it hard to inspire students to employ more quantitative methods and might lead to lack of coherence between method and theory. Thus, the management team of the master's programs will not pursue efforts to encourage quantitative methods per se, but focus on efforts to **broaden and deepen the students understanding of methods and methodologies within textile management (f)**.

Criteria 2: structure, content and implementation support achievement of program goals

Overall the audit group concludes that research seems to be well integrated in the programs based on the number of lecturers, assistant professors and professors and how all teachers are part of a research groups. They suggest, however, that in order to strengthen the overall research environment and the brand of The Swedish School of Textiles, **an additional professor (a)** should be appointed within the field. They also comment that there seems to be an imbalance between the number of teachers within the two main research fields, with a rather large team within textile value chain management and a rather limited team within fashion management. Thus, the audit group suggests that management makes an overview of what can be made to allocate **more resources in fashion management (b)**.

The audit group suggests an inventory of both resources and pedagogical training in all three programs. All teachers at the master's programs have undergone required pedagogical training. Thus, pedagogical training is replaced by the phrase **increased pedagogical dialogue (c)** in the action plan to support that the problem will not be solved by further courses but more with an active dialogue between teachers on how to handle the expectations and capabilities of a heterogenous group of students. The audit group also stresses that part of problem identified might be attributed to the heterogenous expectations on higher educations that

students have, due to different academic and cultural backgrounds. Thus, they suggest that efforts to **clarify to students what to expect in terms of pedagogical content in courses** (d).

The students also commented on **the lack of coordination between programs** (e). The students feel that many similarities between the three programs rather point towards one major program in TM with specializations in respective areas of textile value chain management and fashion management, and lack of coordination between three programs cause confusion. Thus, the audit group suggests that someone takes responsibility for the overall coordination of the three programs.

Criteria 3: Connection to research, reflections on equality, internationalization, sustainability and cooperation with professions

The audit group seems to be overall satisfied with the connection between the program and research. Again, the comment on the imbalance in resources between value chain management and fashion management was made. Overall the main comment with regards to this criterion that applies for all three programs is a tendency among the students (both in their theses and during interviews) to associate sustainability to environmental sustainability only. Thus, the audit group suggests a more pronounced focus on social and economic sustainability in textiles and fashion should be included in the educational curriculum. Concerning relation to professions, the audit group notes that the practical implications, as formulated in the theses, could have been clearer. The last bullet point in the list above concerned the one-year program, and focuses especially on the **need to strengthen the programs relations to the professions**, both in terms of clearer career paths (a) and in terms of building up the alumni (b). All in all, however, program managers acknowledge that efforts can be made to **further clarify how the course contents in all three programs relate to all of these focal areas i.e. connection to research, reflections on equality, internationalization, sustainability and cooperation with professions** (c), both to teachers and to students.

Criteria 4: continuous process of quality assessment and development accounting for students influence/feedback

The response rate in student evaluation forms are too low (a) and the audit team stresses the importance to raise the response rate and find alternative ways of making program evaluations. The audit group also identified **a gap between student expectations and delivery of the programs** (b), that could be caused by different experiences from previous studies.

Time plan for outcome and follow-up (Tidplan för effekter och uppföljning)

Due to the Covid-19 situation, the time frame of this activity plan is unusually long for some of the activities below. On the other hand, since some of the problems were identified already during the fall of 2019 while preparing for the audit, some of the activities below was initiated already during that fall.

List of actions / Åtgärder

(1) Action	(2) Time frame/status	(3) In charge	(4) Follow-up	(5) In effect
Problem identified in the audit:				
<i>Criteria 1 – Scientific breadth, depth and experience in the main subject area - Textile management as field of research</i>				
a) Clarify differences between programs				
b) Clarify progression between bachelor and master levels				
c) Further clarify the field of Textile Management to the students				
A meeting with PM of bachelor's programs and students to investigate the progression between bachelor's and master's level (b) This was initiated already spring 2020 but was postponed due to Covid-19	Initiated	Director of studies	Director of studies	Fall 2021
Make clarifications of the specialization of each program in the program syllabuses (a)	Implemented	PM	FOU	Fall 2021
New introductory course "Theoretical foundations of Supply Chain Management and Fashion Management" (a+b+c) will help to clarify the field of Textile Management	Initiated	PM/ Course manager	Director of studies	Fall 2021
The course "Management of product development and innovation in apparel and textile" is removed (b)	Implemented	PM	Director of studies	Fall 2021
A book with collections of writings from the five research groups that are connected to the education and research in textile management.	Initiated	HAWI /EKW	Head of department	Fall 2023
Recurrent program meetings for the students in which the specialization and progression is addressed (a+b)	Implemented	PM	Director of studies	Fall 2020

Annual presentation of the programs at the recurrent meetings for the textile management team in which the specialization and progression is addressed (a+b)	Implemented	PM	Director of studies	Spring 2021
Problem identified in the audit: <u>Criteria 1 – Scientific breadth, depth and experience in the main subject area - Theses and the field of research</u> a) Clarify the expectations on the grade pass on the theses on respective level. b) Clarify what can be expected from tuition in terms of hours c) Make sure that all theses that pass upholds the quality criteria that is set up d) Help students develop their ability to motivate and position their studies in relation to other studies e) Help students develop their ability to discuss results in relation to current research f) Broaden and deepen the students understanding of methods and methodologies within textile management				
Map what methods are applied and discussed within each of the courses of the programs to create an overview of the situation (f)	Initiated	PM	Director of studies	Jan 2022
Based on the outcome of the investigation suggested above, clarify to students and tutors how and what methods are practiced within the program and possibly inspire course responsible to broaden the scope. (f)	Fall 2021	PM	Director of studies	Fall 2022
New introductory course, "Theoretical foundations of Supply Chain Management and Fashion Management" (a+d+e+f). The main reason for this course is to give the students better foundational knowledge within the main research area.	Initiated	PM	Director of studies	Fall 2021
Move the course in methods to period 2 so that it may better connect the contents to Textile Management theories from the new introduction course. (a+d+e+f) Methodology course	Initiated	Course coordinator	Director of studies	Fall 2021
Introduce the tutors to the students that will write their theses (a+d+e+f) Thesis course.	Initiated	Course coordinator	Director of studies	Fall 2021
Set up a routine for meetings between tutors/examiners to discuss gradings of theses (c) Thesis course	Initiated	Course coordinator	Director of studies	Spring 2021
Change pre-requisites on the program syllabus to allow the contents of courses on the specialization semester year two to deepen both methodological and scientific (a+f)	Implemented	PM	Head of department	Fall 2021

Clarify to students what can be expected from tutors and how many hours are available (a+b) Thesis course	Implemented	Course coordinator	Director of studies	Fall 2021
Set up academic writing progression model (Boråsmodellen) for master students	Fall 2021	Library (in collaboration with PM)	Director of studies	Spring 2022
Plan for implementing academic writing (Boråsmodellen) for master students (a+d+e)	Fall 2022	PM	Director of studies	Fall 2022
Problem identified in the audit: <u>Criteria 2 – Structure, content and implementation to support achievement of program goals</u> a) An additional professor in textile management b) Additional teaching resources for fashion management c) Increased pedagogical dialogue in the teaching team d) clarify to students what to expect in terms of pedagogical contents in courses e) Increase co-ordination between programs				
Rudrajeet Pal appointed new professor (a)	Implemented	Head of department	Dean of Faculty	Spring 2021
Recruitment of teacher in fashion management (b)	Initiated	Head of department	Head of department	Fall 2021
Map contents, examinations and pedagogical approach within the courses of the program to create an overview of the current situation (c)	Fall 2021	PM	Director of studies	Jan 2022
The research group that was previously named “Sustainable consumption” will orient itself further towards Fashion Management specialization (b)	Initiated	Research group leader	Head of department	Spring 2021
New introductory course, “Theoretical foundations of Supply Chain Management and Fashion Management” (a+b+c+d), will help align students expectation on teaching methods in the program	Initiated	Course coordinator	Director of studies	Fall 2021
Annual program meetings for the Textile Management team in which the specialization and progression is addressed (c+e)	Implemented	PM	Director of studies	Spring 2021

Create a series of research group presentations to the Textile Management team (c+e)	Implemented	Director of studies	Head of department	Spring 2020
Overall coordinator of the three programs is appointed (e)	Implemented	Director of studies	Head of department	Jan 2021
Problem identified in the audit: <i>Criteria 3: Connection to research, reflections on equality, internationalization, sustainability and cooperation with professions</i> a) Clarify career paths for students b) Organize alumni activities c) Further clarify the contents in the courses in regards to these focal areas explained in the heading				
Map connection to research, equality, internationalization, sustainability and cooperation with professions within the courses in the program to create an overview of the current situation (c)	Initiated	PM	Director of studies	Jan 2022
Set up alumni activities (c+d)	Fall 2021	Communication	Director of studies	Fall 2021
Go through LinkedIn Alumni list to map career paths of previous students (c)	Completed	PM	Director of studies	Spring 2021
Set up LinkedIn groups for promotion to help recruitment (c)	Initiated	PM	Director of studies	Spring 2021
Find alumni student representatives (c+d)	Fall 2021	PM	Director of studies	Spring 2021
Workshop for writing CV as part of the field study course. Also available for one-year students (c)	Completed	PM	Director of studies	Fall 2020
Find a way to involve the Coordinator for External Affairs in the process of increasing professionals in the courses and to support the students in finding internships.	Fall 2021	PM	Director of studies	Fall 2022

Create opportunities to exchange the course Field study in Textile Management with international experience (c)	Fall 2021	PM	Director of studies	Spring 2023
Set more focus on social sustainability issues in the course "Sustainability supply chain management in apparel and textile" (7,5 ECTS credits course given in the first year of studies)	Spring 2022	Course manager	Director of studies	Spring 2022
Problem identified in the audit: <u>Criteria 4. Continuous process of quality assessment and development for student's influence/feedback</u> a) The response rate on student evaluations too low. b) Expectations on teaching and influence too heterogenous				
Co-ordinate student evaluations on the first year for all three programs (a)	Initiated	PM	Head of department	Spring 2021
Co-ordinated recurrent meetings for the first year for all three programs for feedback (b)	Implemented	PM	Head of department	Fall 2020
Assign student representatives – 2 from each program (a+b)	Implemented	PM	Head of department	Fall 2020
Organize advisory boards for AMSTV and TMFMM/AMFMM respectively – with representatives from the one-year program in both (b)	Initiated	PM	Head of department	Spring 2021
Focus on oral evaluation for the second year of the master's programs (a)	Implemented	PM	Director of studies	Fall 2020
New introductory course, "Theoretical foundations of Supply Chain Management and Fashion Management" (b), will help align students expectation on teaching methods in the program	initiated	Course coordinator.	Director of studies	Fall 2021