

UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG  
Department of Journalism, Media and Communication



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**Master's programme in Investigative Journalism**  
60.0 Credits

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Code: S2JOU

**Valid from**

HT2024 Autumn semester 2024

**Swedish name**

Magisterprogrammet i undersökande journalistik

**Entry level**

2 Second cycle

Specialisations

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**Decision maker**

SN1 Faculty Board of Social Sciences

**Decision date**

2024-06-13

**Date of entry into force**

2024-09-02

**Valid from semester**

Autum semester 2024

## Registration number

GU 2024/1816

## Purpose

The Master's Programme in Investigative Journalism aims to provide students with advanced knowledge and skills in investigative journalism, with a particular focus on cross-border collaborations. The programme combines theoretical and practical perspectives and provides a good foundation for those wishing to work in investigative journalism at national or international level.

The programme places a strong emphasis on practical skills such as data journalism, visualisations, project management and cross-border collaborations, as well as familiarity with the rapidly growing national and international journalistic networks and organisations outside the traditional media houses. One of the key pedagogical ideas is that students work together, share experiences and learn to find and use new tools and methods.

The programme also provides a theoretical basis for further academic studies in the field of journalism, with particular emphasis on investigative journalism, its conditions and circumstances, both nationally and globally.

The programme is well anchored in the research traditions of JMG in terms of journalism as a profession and democratic institution, editorial organisation and political communication.

One focus of the programme is knowledge and skills in journalistic and social science research methods, not least the collection, processing and analysis of data from both public and self-collected sources. The programme is well rooted in the media industry and professional organisations, both nationally and internationally, and is continuously developed in consultation with representatives of academia, the media industry and journalistic interest groups.

## Entry requirements

A Bachelor's degree of 180 credits or corresponding. Applicants must prove knowledge of English: English 6/English Course B from Swedish Upper Secondary School or the equivalent level of an internationally recognized test, for example TOEFL, IELTS.

## Degree and main field of study

The programme leads to a Degree of Master of Science, major in journalism with a specialisation in investigative journalism. The programme comprises 60 higher education credits.

## Content

The programme comprises four compulsory courses of 15 credits each.

The first three courses (JU2601, JU2602 and JU2600) are compulsory for all students.

In the last course period, which includes the independent project, the student can choose between JU2603 Master's thesis in investigative journalism and JU2604 Master's project in investigative journalism.

All courses have journalism as their main subject.

The main pedagogical idea of the programme is an integration of theoretical and practical elements, as well as collaboration with journalism networks, organisations and media companies. The practical elements are mainly carried out in project groups, in accordance with how professional investigative journalism is often conducted.

The programme is mainly campus-based and requires active participation on site. There are online or hybrid elements. It is not possible to follow the programme remotely or at a pace other than full-time.

The programme does not include an internship, but students are encouraged to collaborate with media houses in Sweden or other countries in order to get their projects published.

The first course of the programme, JU2601, Investigative journalism in digital environments, 15 credits, introduces the basics of news journalism and investigative journalism, both in terms of theoretical perspectives and practical implementation.

The course aims to provide the student group with a common frame of reference for what investigative

journalism is, including its societal relevance and media ethical dimensions. It provides a toolbox for conducting their own investigations in groups and provides skills for producing and publishing their own findings in journalistic form.

The course also provides a broad overview of the research field of investigative journalism.

The second course of the programme, JU 2602, Data Journalism and Visualisation, 15 credits, is about using data for journalistic purposes to draw your own conclusions. The course covers various methods for collecting, cleaning, evaluating, analysing and presenting data.

Students will use current tools to manage and visualise data and carry out projects that apply the entire data journalism process. With these skills as a basis, students are trained to scrutinise and evaluate data, data processing and data presentation from source-critical and media-ethical perspectives.

As data journalism and visualisation is a growing field in the industry, there is also current research that can contextualise and deepen the understanding of this journalistic genre.

The third course, JU 2600, Investigative Journalism Across Borders, 15 credits, aims to sharpen the discussions towards international networks and transnational investigative journalism (cross-border collaborations). This type of journalistic project places advanced demands on project management, intercultural competence, clarity in research, hypothesis testing and verification of facts.

The course also includes a theoretical component in the form of a comparative perspective on the rest of the world, its media systems and journalistic cultures. This perspective develops students' ability to scrutinise investigative journalism from political and ethical perspectives and to discuss its future development.

The course includes an elaborated project plan and preparatory research for a cross-border project, which students can continue to work on during the final course of the programme.

The programme ends either with the course Master's thesis in investigative journalism, JU2603, 15 credits, or with the course Master's project in investigative journalism, JU2604, 15 credits.

The Master's thesis is an academic thesis, where the student can write about any topic in journalism research, preferably specialising in investigative journalism.

The Master's project is a journalistic project, which is usually done in groups. Here, too, the choice of topic is up to the students. Many of the journalistic projects are done in co-operation with media houses, in Sweden or abroad.

Regardless of whether the student chooses a thesis or a project, high demands are placed on a systematic approach, transparency and theoretical grounding. In the final degree course, students must demonstrate that they have the ability to formulate a relevant question based on relevant theoretical perspectives, choose the most appropriate method and design a study. The study must be carried out, the results processed and the analysis presented in an appropriate form, taking into account ethical aspects of research and development work.

## **Objectives**

### **General outcomes for Degree of Master (60 credits)**

#### *Knowledge and understanding*

For a Degree of Master (60 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including both an overview of the field and specialised knowledge in certain areas of the field as well as insight into current research and development work, and
- demonstrate specialised methodological knowledge in the main field of study.

#### *Competence and skills*

For a Degree of Master (60 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to integrate knowledge and analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations even with limited information
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues autonomously as well as to plan and, using appropriate methods, undertake advanced tasks within predetermined time frames
- demonstrate the ability in speech and writing to report clearly and discuss his or her conclusions and the knowledge and arguments on which they are based in dialogue with different audiences, and
- demonstrate the skills required for participation in research and development work or employment in

some other qualified capacity.

#### *Judgement and approach*

For a Degree of Master (60 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the main field of study informed by relevant disciplinary, social and ethical issues and also to demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work
- demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and
- demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for his or her ongoing learning.

#### **Local outcomes**

##### *Knowledge and understanding*

For a Degree of Master (60 credits) the student shall be able to

- describe and explain key areas of investigative journalism such as news evaluation, source criticism and media ethics,
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the scientific basis of the field, and be orientated in current research issues,
- demonstrate in-depth knowledge and understanding of both investigative journalism and social science methods, and
- demonstrate in-depth knowledge of international perspectives on investigative journalism and its development in terms of, for example, media systems, journalistic cultures, funding models, digital solutions and transnational networks.

##### *Competence and skills*

For a Degree of Master (60 credits) the student shall be able to

- initiate, plan and, using appropriate methods, carry out advanced national and transnational projects in investigative journalism from concept to publication, including fact-checking of their own material, within given time frames, and
- collect material and analyse and process it journalistically for online publication in a variety of formats, such as text, audio and images.

##### *Judgement and approach*

For a Degree of Master (60 credits) the student shall be able to

- critically review and discuss investigative journalism from the perspectives of news evaluation, journalistic and societal relevance, media ethics and the development of journalism, and
- critically scrutinise and evaluate data, data processing and data presentations from source-critical and media ethical perspectives.

#### **Sustainability labelling**

IH No sustainability labelling.

#### **Transitional provisions**

Students admitted to the programme under the previous programme syllabus and wishing to complete their studies will be given the opportunity to have an individual study plan within the programme, if practicable.

#### **Other regulations**

- The language of instruction is English.
- The studies may include travelling to or staying in another location, within or outside Sweden, for example if the student chooses to conduct interviews or field studies in a location other than Gothenburg as part of a journalistic project. Any such travel is voluntary and is paid for by the student themselves.
- There may be trips initiated by the department, within or outside Sweden, for studies and fieldwork. In these cases, the department pays for travelling to and from Gothenburg and accommodation in the locality. Food costs are borne by the students. Students who, for whatever reason, do not want to go

on such a study trip are offered a free alternative on campus.

- Scheduled teaching is during daytime, Monday to Friday. However, study-related work may occur on evenings and weekends, if required, for example for interviews or field studies.
- Students are expected to have access to their own laptop and smartphone with sufficient capacity to download and work with the necessary software for research, recording of audio and video, editing, database management and visualisations.
- The study programme will be followed up and evaluated in accordance with the applicable Policy för kvalitetssäkring och kvalitetsutveckling av utbildning vid Göteborgs universitet (Policy for the Quality assurance and Quality Development of Education at the University of Gothenburg).

### **Guaranteed admission**

Students who follow the courses in the programme syllabus at the prescribed pace are generally guaranteed a place in the three compulsory courses in the programme (JU2601, JU2602 and JU2600) and in one of the two elective degree courses within the programme (JU2603 or JU2604).