

Questions about the institutional framework of a future joint international MA in Microhistory

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„Please find underneath the above mentioned questions to be answered by you or to be presented to the relevant office or officer of your university. If a question is irrelevant, please jump it over.”

Personal involvement

1. Have you personally taught Microhistory at university level? What kind of courses they were? What was the students' response to this course or these courses?

Yes, courses in local history (theory and methods). In Norway local history has two genres: an academic and a popular (Winge 1995). Such courses are quite popular, especially when student can write assessment on their own topics with teacher feedback in the process.

2. These courses formed parts of what module or unit of education? Were they compulsory or optional for students?

Both first and second year of bachelor. In addition some has written bachelor theses (third / final year) on microhistorical topics.

3. In which languages have you taught these courses?

Norwegian, expect once in English for incoming foreign students to VUC, first year level.

4. Do you think that there is interest from the part of students in being enrolled in an MA in Microhistory in English?

Difficult to say – depends upon the whole framework of the MA programme.

5. Do you personally intend to take part in teaching a joint international MA in Microhistory in English?

If it can be included in my other duties at VUC, yes.

6. Have you got colleagues who would take part in teaching in a joint international MA in Microhistory? Who are they? Have they explicitly declared their willingness or you just suppose that they might participate?

May be, under the same assumptions.

Institutional involvement

7. Would your university be interested in taking part in such a venture? (Please on this point base your reply on the responsible declaration of the relevant office or officer of your university. Eötvös University, for example, have a Vice-Rector for International Affairs.)

The VUC staff are not sure. We will need approval from NOKUT (the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education, see below). We will consider participation.

8. If your university's attitude to such a programme is not outright negative, what framework would be acceptable for it? Does your university insist on giving an MA degree itself? Would it consider teaching courses that are part of an MA accredited elsewhere? Would it be part of the difficult process of the accreditation of a joint degree?

VUC will not insist on giving the degree. VUC may provide one course online, which will not be a part of any existing MA degree. This would require accreditation from NOKUT.

9. Does your university run English-language BA or MA or PhD programmes in History? Is there a chance that Microhistory be integrated into such a programme instead of establishing a full-fledged MA specially for Microhistory?

No.

- 10.** If your university is willing to try to embark on the accreditation of a joint MA degree or its own MA degree in Microhistory, what are the prerequisites of such a procedure in your country? Approximately how much time does it need?

VUC will probably not be willing to embark on such a process.

Contents and formalities

11. If your university would teach courses of an MA accredited by another university or courses of a joint international MA, what tuition fees does it expect to receive?

None.

12. Are there any examples of a joint BA or MA programme at your university? What is its institutional framework look like?

Not yet.

13. What makes an MA in your system of education? How many semester of teaching, how many courses and credits, how many seminars and lectures, and how is the writing of the thesis integrated into the studies? Which are the rules followed in giving marks to students?

The relevant MA requires 120 ECTS Credits, normally four courses 15 ECTS each (or 6 by 10 ECTS) and 60 ECTS master thesis. Master courses in Volda is mostly session-based, 2-4 weeks intensive teaching each semester (30 ECTS). Integration of thesis in courses differs, but in the relevant history program, it is not very close (linked to the main topic: cultural encounters). Full time is 4 semesters, about half of the students take the program in half time, 8 semesters. About marks, see http://www.hivolda.no/for-studentar/studentsorvis/eksamen_vurdering/karaktersystemet (English at the lower part of the page).

14. Does your institution has experience in or established practices as for building online courses into its curricula? Do you personally think that such courses might make a part of a joint international MA in Microhistory?

Yes, VUC has been giving online courses, mostly in combination with session-based teaching. Yes, I do.

15. According to you, which courses should form parts of a joint international MA in Microhistory? Which subject areas should not be omitted from the curriculum?

The courses plan according to Norwegian practice should consist of four or six courses. Two courses should be compulsory: general theory (not specific on Microhistory) and the history of Microhistory. Otherwise, the participating universities may form a number of optional courses students can choose from.

16. Are you personally willing to teach any of these courses? Which one? And have you got colleagues in your university who are willing to teach any?

Difficult to say at the moment.

17. If so, would you teach an online course? Have you got experience in that? Is your institution technically prepared to make this possible?

I guess an online course is the most convenient for my teaching. I have 15 years of experience, and VUC has good technical capacities.

18. Could you be personally involved in teaching a course (for example an online course or an intensive course, as a guest lecturer or in any other way) even if your institution abstains from this future cooperation?

Yes.

19. Which are the courses that your institution would be willing to take the responsibility for?

Difficult to say at the moment.

20. How such a curriculum should be put together from the point of view of the students? Should they travel from one participating institution to the other spending each semester in a different country? Or should they stay at their degree-giving mother university and leave for other participating institutions for intensive courses? Maybe instead of travelling, the widespread use of online courses should be advocated? Should travelling to other institutions for a semester be offered to students as optional?

I believe the basic principle should be online courses. However, institutions should consider offer them using the principles of flipped learning on campus, if they have enough students.

Other

21. Which are the financial schemes applied to student and teacher mobility in your institution? Can we use it for the purposes of running an joint MA in Microhistory?

ERASMUS+ EEA. These can provide grants for students and teachers involved in a joint MA.

22. Please add your comment which you would like to make but have not yet had the chance to do so.

References:

Winge, H.: Local History, in Hubbard, W. H. et al. 1995: *Making a Historical Culture. Historiography in Norway*. Scandinavian University press.

About NOKUT, see <http://www.nokut.no/en/About-NOKUT/>