

University Gateway



Bifröst University preparation program

University Gateway curriculum

Issued for students who start in the schoolyear 2024-2025

Curriculum title:

University Gateway – Bifröst University preparatory program for students with a foreign language. Icelandic title: Háskólagátt fyrir nemendur með erlent móðurmál – Aðfaranám Háskólans á Bifröst

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Number of credit units:

70 credit units at the Icelandic upper-secondary school level (í. f-einingar)

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Table of contents

University Gateway – about the program.....	4
Admission requirements.....	4
Program description	5
Study progression	5
Teaching Methods	7
Assessment	7
Opportunities for further studies at the completion of the University Gateway program	7
Competency criteria	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Knowledge	8
Skills.....	8
Competencies	8

University Gateway – about the program

This curriculum describes the content of the University Gateway program at Bifröst University. The program is designed in accordance with Icelandic rules no.835/2019 on preparatory studies for Universities. The program corresponds to 70 credit units at the Icelandic upper-secondary school level – which is equivalent to one year of full time studies. Students can spread their studies over a longer period. Those who are at level A in Icelandic as second language (according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, CEFR) when they start the program will need more than one schoolyear to finish the program. Students are expected to take courses in Icelandic alongside their University Gateway courses.

Emphases of the National Curriculum for the Icelandic Secondary school level (í. Aðalnámskrá Framhaldsskóla) are reflected in the University Gateway program. This includes integrating into the courses the six pillars of Icelandic Educational Policy for the elementary and secondary school levels. The six pillars are literacy, sustainability, health and wellbeing, democracy and human rights, equality, and creativity. The values of Bifröst University are also reflected in the program. These values are initiative, cooperation and responsibility.

The objective of the University Gateway program is to prepare students for university studies in Icelandic in the fields of Humanities and Social Science and provide them with knowledge and skills that are valuable for professional development. Students graduate from the University Gateway Program with knowledge, skills and competences of level 3 of the Icelandic Qualification Framework (ISQF), and level 4 of the European Qualification Framework (EQF).

The University Gateway program emphasises critical thinking and student initiative. The teaching is mostly online, but once during each course the students and teachers meet for an on-site workshop.

Admission requirements

The University Gateway program is for adult learners. Admission requirements are any of the following:

- Completion of a learning program at ISQF level 2 / EQF level 3 or above or
- Completion of the equivalent of 100 credit units at the Icelandic secondary school level or
- Having completed the [Menntastoðir](#) program and having at least 2-3 years of work experience.

Foreign educational documents are evaluated by ENIC/NARIC Iceland to assess if admission requirements are fulfilled.

Students in the University Gateway program may be eligible for a student loan from the Icelandic student loan fund. Information about the eligibility are available on their website.

According to information from the Icelandic directorate of immigration, studies in the University Gateway program do not make you eligible for a residence permit for students.

Program description

The University Gateway program is designed in order to prepare students for University education in Icelandic in the fields of Humanities and Social Science as well as providing them with valuable skills for professional development.

Core subjects in the program are mathematics and English, and students are expected to take Icelandic as second language courses alongside the University Gateway. Students take courses in information technology, social sciences as well as the courses My path in life. Students also take elective courses.

Some of the courses of the program are instructed in English and others in Icelandic. Students can start taking courses instructed in Icelandic when they have reached level A2.2 in Icelandic.

Special support is provided in courses instructed in Icelandic for students who have a foreign language as native language. The support students can expect includes special meetings with the teacher for further explanation, major concepts provided both in Icelandic and English, additional learning materials in English and the possibility of turning in assignments in English.

Most courses are taught in six-week sessions with an additional seventh week for assessment. However, some of the courses are shorter or longer due to the nature of the subjects. Students get a week-long break between sessions. This structure helps students to focus on the subjects they are taking. Students attend on-site workshops once during each course.

Study progression

The University Gateway program corresponds to 70 credit units at the Icelandic secondary school level, which is equivalent to full time studies in one year. Students can spread their studies over a longer period. Those who are at CEFR level A in Icelandic as second language when they start the program will need more than one schoolyear to finish the program. Students are expected to take courses in Icelandic alongside their University Gateway courses. Students can start taking courses instructed in Icelandic when they have reached CEFR level A2.2 in Icelandic.

Students take a total of 50 credits of mandatory courses. They take at least 15 credits in English, of which 10 credits are mandatory, and they choose between English as Second Language and Academic English. Those who do not have English as their first language take English as second language, and those who have English as their first language take Academic English. 15 credit units are reserved for elective courses. The following table presents the program structure for the University Gateway program for students who start in Fall 2024. Course descriptions are available here on our [curriculum website](#). Courses with an English course name are taught in English and courses with an Icelandic course name are taught in Icelandic.

Fall semester		
	Credits	ISQF
Pre-session (two weeks)		
My Path in life (all semester)	1	2

Information technology	3	1
Session 1		
Icelandic culture	5	2
English as second language (restricted elective**)	5	2
Stærðfræði: Algebra, rúmfræði, föll og hlutföll*	5	2
Skapandi og gagnrýnin hugsun*	5	3
Session 2		
Stærðfræði: Föll, veldi, deildarreikningur, lógaritmar, runur og raðir*	5	2
English: Literature, grammar and expression (B2)	5	2
Landið mitt Ísland*(elective***)	5	3

Spring semester		
Session 1	Credits	ISQF
Leiðin mín í lífinu 2 (all semester)*	1	2
Stærðfræði: Föll, markgildi, deilda- og heildareikningur*	5	3
English: Vocabulary and composition (B2)	5	3
Samfélagsspegill*	5	3
Session 2		
Tölfræði*	5	2
Accounting and Financial Literacy (elective*)	5	3
Academic English (restricted elective**)	5	3
Stofnun og rekstur fyrirtækja* (elective***)	5	3

* Students will need to have passed language assessment at CEFR level A2.2 in Icelandic in order to take classes instructed in Icelandic.

** Students take at least three courses in English. They take either English as second language or Academic English. They can take the fourth course as an elective course.

*** Students take 15 credits (three courses) of pure elective courses.

The following chart shows an example of a two-year progression for a student whose starting level in Icelandic is A1.2 (CEFR):

First year					
First two weeks	Fall session 1	Fall session 2	Spring session 1	Spring session 1	Summer
Information Technology	Icelandic A1.2 5e	Icelandic A2.1 5e	Icelandic A2.1 5e	Icelandic A2.2 5e	Icelandic A2.2 5e
	English as SL 5e	English B2 5e	English B2 5e	Academic English 5e	
	My Path in Life 1 1e			Elective 5e	
	Icelandic Culture 5e				
Second year					
	Fall session 1	Fall session 2	Spring session 1	Spring session 1	Summer
	Íslenska B1.1 5e	Íslenska B1.1 5e	Íslenska B1.2 5e	Íslenska B1.2 5e	Íslenska B2.1 5e
	Stærðfræði 1 5e	Stærðfræði 2 5e	Stærðfræði 3 5e	Tölfræði 5e	
	Gagnrýnin hugsun 5e	Elective 5e	Samfélagsspegill 5e	Elective 5e	
			Leiðin mín í lífinu 2 1e		

Teaching Methods

Bifröst University is the leading online University in Iceland, and teaching methods will reflect that. Students will access recorded lectures and instructions, learning material and assignments in the University's learning management system. In all programs at Bifröst University there is an emphasis on cooperative learning and real projects that are connected to the community, businesses and organizations. Large parts of the assessment are based on regular assignments and projects that train students to work independently. Cooperation and team work are also important parts of the studies. Teachers use flipped learning in their instructions. In the learning process students are trained to use their creative imagination as well as analysis and critical skills. The role of the instructor is to facilitate learning by providing continuous guidance and feedback on student work. However, the students themselves are responsible for using the resources provided in the program for their own success.

Assessment

Assessment in the University Gateway program is largely cumulative. Students have regular assignments throughout each course. They participate in discussions and work on thematic projects. Each course has either a final project or a final exam. Exams can be written or oral. Teachers are expected to provide much feedback and should be able to provide students with explanation and criteria for grading.

Opportunities for further studies upon completion of the University Gateway program

A student who successfully completes the University Gateway program and has reached CEFR level B1.2 in Icelandic as second language fulfills the admission requirements for undergraduate studies in all departments of Bifröst University. Other universities have their own admission requirements and students who plan to apply at other universities are encouraged to seek information about the admission requirements of those Universities before starting the University Gateway program.

Learning Outcomes

Completion of the University Gateway program is at level 3 of the Icelandic Qualification Framework (ISQF) and level 4 of the European Qualification framework (EQF). The program is designed based on Icelandic rules no. 835/2019 on preparatory studies for Universities. Student work is evaluated in standardised credit units of the Icelandic secondary school system. One credit unit equals 18-24 hours of student work. At the completion of the program students should be able to show the following knowledge, skills and competencies.

Knowledge

The student:

- Has basic knowledge in the core subjects of the secondary school system and is able to use it for his or her work and further studies
- Has basic understanding of humanities and social science that prepares him or her for university studies in those fields
- Has a vocabulary extensive enough to express his knowledge and opinions and provide sound arguments for them
- Has gained knowledge of cultural differences as a basis for cultural literacy
- Understands the connections between school and work
- Understands the role of an active and responsible citizen in a knowledge community
- Has knowledge of both Icelandic and international research platforms
- Understands the nature and execution of democratic decisions in different situations.
- Has vocabulary and knowledge of a foreign language that he or she can use to further his or her studies

Skills

The student:

- Is able to express him- or herself in a clear, critical and creative way about basic subjects in the field of humanities and social sciences
- Can use the appropriate technology and methods used in the fields of social sciences and mathematics
- Can show initiative and independence in work methods, problem solving and knowledge building
- Is able to participate in discussion about social issues in a responsible way
- Can communicate and understand the core subjects of the secondary school level and basic subjects of humanities and social science

Competencies

The student:

- Can express his or her opinions and explain his or her work methods in a responsible and critical way
- Can express him- or herself and use material and information in a foreign language whether it is in connection to work or further studies
- Shows responsibility in work, in creation and when knowledge is used.
- Can use his or her knowledge to detect new opportunities in his or her environment and in order to take on further studies
- Is able to make a critical assessment of his own work
- Is an active and responsible citizen in a democratic society
- Can understand his or her education in an international context
- Can connect his or her knowledge and skills with technology and science