

## **Master's Degree in Coastal and Marine Management:**

120 ECTS to MRM degree

### **Definition**

120 ECTS credits, international and cross-disciplinary master's program in environmental science and resource management, with a clear focus on coastal and marine management, organised by and taught at the University Centre of the Westfjords, Iceland.

The program is classified as a terminal master's program from which students receive a master's degree – an MRM (Master of Resource Management) degree. The program's learning outcomes are based on the Icelandic Ministry of Education, Science and Culture's National Qualification Framework for Higher Education, which defines knowledge, skills and competences for cycle 2.2. The program qualifies graduates to be admitted to doctoral programs at cycle 3.

### **Study structure**

The program comprises of 120 ECTS credits. It is divided into four semesters, starting with ten months of intensive courses taught in three consecutive semesters (in total 75 ECTS credits), and seven months allotted to the student's final project, 45 ECTS credits. Study breaks are during Christmas and Easter. Up to half of the program's courses are classified as core courses and the remaining courses are classified as elective courses.

### **Academic and administrative responsibility**

The University of Akureyri is responsible for ensuring academic quality at the program through majority representation in the program's academic quality committee. Students are registered as students both at the University Centre of the Westfjords and at The University of Akureyri and have rights and obligations to both institutes. The University of Akureyri confers and certifies the MRM degree.

The program is organised and administrated by The University Centre of the Westfjords. Teachers, thesis advisors and thesis readers are recruited by the program director and approved/nominated by the master's program's academic quality committee.

### **Admittance**

Candidates must have completed a first University degree (BS, BA or other equivalent degrees), and fulfil other considerations set by the program's academic quality committee. First class grade is usually required.

Upon completion of the degree, each student has fulfilled the following goals, in addition to what was gained at the previous level:

#### **1. Knowledge**

Degree holders possess knowledge of how coastal and marine resources and regions are best managed, following the core principles of ICZM and sustainable development. They have gained comprehensive knowledge of the management of coastal and marine areas and of cross-disciplinary approaches to accurately define, address and solve problems and issues facing these areas. They understand the premises on which international coastal and marine management rests, as a field of knowledge, and have knowledge of basic principles and processes of its core subjects, including oceanography, ecology, law, economics, planning and physical processes of the coast. They are able to show a systematic and up-to-date acquaintance with best practices in

natural resource management and utilization worldwide, with special emphasis on the northern hemisphere, as well as more specific problems related to advances in technology and transportation. They have strong understanding of the current international regime and international governmental organisations dealing with environmental problems, such as international conventions, agreements and law enforcement, and the premises they are based up on. They have understanding of current and best practices in environmental planning, assessment, certification programs and eco labelling schemes directed towards coastal and marine regions.

*This entails that holders:*

- 1.1. possess knowledge of the core scientific subjects within the field of management of coastal and marine regions and resources, as well as its main past, current and future challenges, conflicts, issues and problems.
- 1.2. have acquired knowledge through own desktop-based and/or field-based research
- 1.3. can provide arguments for and defend their own findings and recommendations, as well as providing constructive criticism for other people's findings and recommendations.
- 1.4. can place the latest knowledge in context within coastal and marine management, including best available practices and current laws and regulations
- 1.5. are familiar with the most commonly used research methods within management of coastal and marine environment and natural resources, especially those relevant within their own field of specialisation
- 1.6. have knowledge of science ethics, both in regards to their own scientific subjects and other members of the scientific community (e.g. plagiarism).

## **2. Skills**

Degree holders can apply methods and procedures within the field of coastal and marine management. They have gained skills in locating and assessing relevant, up-to-date and reliable resources of information through multiple means. They are able to write and edit and review professional reports and academic reports. They are able to apply international law, conventions and agreements on resource usage and environmental issues to local context. They are able to apply and integrate international management approaches and ICZM principles. They understand how the coast and the ocean 'works' through various physical and ecological principles and processes of coastal areas, and can apply their knowledge, understanding and proficiency to situations which require the best available management strategies. They can target a defined problem, assess information at hand and draw inferences about how best to approach its resolution.

*This entails that holders:*

- 2.1. have adopted skills for selecting and applying relevant key instruments in the field of coastal and marine management
- 2.2. are capable of analyzing and imparting qualitative and quantitative data
- 2.3. can understand and tackle complex subjects in a professional context
- 2.4. can effectively apply their knowledge and understanding in their scientific and professional work, both as individuals and as members of a group
- 2.5. can collect, analyse and evaluate scientific data as well and the quality of published work.

- 2.6. can apply their knowledge, understanding and proficiency in new and unfamiliar situations or in an interdisciplinary context
- 2.7. can develop projects and place them in context by applying methods based on scientific theories, policy instruments and management tools.
- 2.8. are capable of integrating knowledge, resolve complex issues and present an opinion based on the available information
- 2.9. can effectively apply relevant research methods and implement small-scale research projects
- 2.10. understand research and research findings.

### 3. Competences

Degree holders can apply their knowledge and skills in a practical way in their profession, e.g. as environmental managers specialised in coastal and/or ocean regions, and/or further studies, e.g. a doctoral degree. They can effectively communicate specific problems within the scope of coastal and marine management, facilitate discussions (e.g. with stakeholder audience), and deliver presentations using academic terminology and/or layman terminology. They can effectively participate in public and academic discourse. They are able to demonstrate knowledge of data analysis and research processes and choose the appropriate research method for a given topic. They are able to identify and interpret local circumstances and traditional knowledge by applying scientific methods, taking existing best available practices and relevant, available research findings into account. They can implement cross-disciplinary analysis involving mixed methods and data of different types (e.g. from economics, ecology and/or social sciences) and effectively present their findings and recommendations, orally and in writing, according to accepted academic standards at level 2.2.

*This entails that holders:*

- 3.1. have developed the necessary learning skills and independence for further studies
- 3.2. can initiate and lead projects within the field of management of coastal and marine environment and natural resources, and be responsible for the work of individuals and groups
- 3.3. can communicate complex scientific information, challenges and findings within the field of coastal and marine management to scholars as well as to general audience
- 3.4. are capable of presenting and describing scientific issues and research findings using analytical and methodological terminology
- 3.5. can make decisions in an independent, professional manner and defend them
- 3.6. can evaluate the suitability of the different methods of analysis and evaluate complex scientific issues in each case
- 3.7. can communicate statistical information using tables and figures in a clear and effective manner.