European Project Semester

Student Handbook

UNIVERSITY OF BORÅS

Contents

About This Handbook

This handbook provides all the essential information you need to succeed in the European Project Semester (EPS) at the University of Borås. It covers an overview all courses in the EPS program — the main interdisciplinary engineering project course, and four supporting courses — along with learning outcomes, assessment requirements, report guidelines, and practical advice for teamwork and project management.

EPS is a full-semester, project-based program where international and multidisciplinary student teams tackle real-world engineering challenges set by academic or industry partners. You will work as a team for approximately 20 weeks, combining technical skills with project management, sustainable development, intercultural communication, and professional engineering practice.

Read this handbook carefully at the start of the semester. Refer back to it whenever you have questions about expectations, deadlines, or deliverables — for any of the five courses you are enrolled in. If something is unclear, always ask your supervisor or EPS coordinator.

Note: A dedicated report template adapted for EPS (in English) will be provided separately on the course platform. The template described on page 12 of this handbook reflects the expected structure.

Programme Structure and Course Overview

The EPS programme at the University of Borås consists of five courses running in parallel across one semester (approximately 20 weeks). The main project course (A361TG) accounts for 20 hp and is the primary vehicle for your engineering work. The four supporting courses develop competences that directly support and complement the project.

All Courses at a Glance

Course	Code	Credits	Assessment	Schedule (approx. weeks)
European Project Semester: Interdisciplinary Engineering Project	A361TG	20 hp	Project process (8 hp) + Portfolio & presentation (12 hp)	Weeks 1–20 (progressive)
Project Management	A364TG	5 hp	Group project plan (4 hp) + Presentation & opposition (1 hp)	Weeks 1–10
Introduction to Sustainable Development from an Engineering Perspective	A362TG	3 hp	Written examination (3 hp)	Weeks 1–10
Popular Science Communication for Engineers*	A363TG	2 hp	Submission with oral presentation	Weeks 6–15
Swedish Language and Culture – EPS	CSF120	2 credits**	Seminar	Weeks 1–5
TOTAL	—	**30 hp + 2 credits***		

* This course is taken by Swedish students in place of the Swedish Language and Culture course. It is, however, optional for incoming international exchange students.

** Swedish Language and Culture carry 2 pre-education credits (förutbildningspoäng). These credits cannot be used toward a degree at a Swedish university, but international exchange students may include them when their EPS semester is recognised and credited at their home institution.

Integrated Semester Schedule

The table below shows how the five courses are distributed across the 20-week semester. Weeks are approximate and will be confirmed in the official course schedule published at the start of term.

Weeks	EPS Project A361TG	Project Mgmt A364TG	Sust. Dev. A362TG	Pop. Sci. Comm A363TG	Swedish CSF120
1–5	Project introduction & team formation	Lectures & assignments begin	—	—	Intensive block
6–10	Problem definition & investigation	Project plan submission & presentations	—	Lectures & project work begin	Seminar / exam
10–15	Development, testing & mid-semester pitch (wk 9)	—	Lectures begin	Communication material production	—
15–18	Report writing, peer review & oral defence	—	Seminars; written exam	Final submission & presentation	—

How the Courses Connect

The four supporting courses are not independent of your project — they are designed to feed directly into it:

- Project Management (A364TG) teaches you the tools and frameworks you use to plan and run your EPS project.
- Sustainable Development (A362TG) gives you the concepts and frameworks for Section 8 (Sustainability & Ethics) of your project report.
- Popular Science Communication (A363TG) develops the communication materials you present alongside your project — posters, videos, or visual summaries.
- Swedish Language and Culture (CSF120) provide orientation in Swedish work culture that helps you navigate daily life and professional interactions during your stay.

The Project Course: A361TG — 20 hp

The main project course is the heart of EPS. Over 20 weeks, your team will work on a real-world engineering challenge assigned by an industry or academic partner. You will move through problem scoping, research, design, development, and validation, culminating in a full technical report and oral defence.

Field	Details
Course title (English)	European Project Semester: Interdisciplinary Engineering Project
Course title (Swedish)	European Project Semester – Tvärdisciplinärt ingenjörsprojekt
Course code	A361TG
Credits	20 hp (ECTS)
Level	First cycle (Grundnivå)
Language of instruction	English
Grading scale	A–F (7-grade scale)
Valid from	Autumn 2026
Prerequisites	Admission to a first-cycle engineering programme. Project-specific prerequisites described in the project description document.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, you should be able to demonstrate the following competences. All assessment is designed to measure your achievement against these outcomes.

LO	Category	Description
1.1	Knowledge	Account for the project's problem context, goals, scope and stakeholders, and relate these to relevant engineering science and/or business theory.
1.2	Knowledge	Explain and justify the choice of methods for requirements management, system analysis, modelling, design, implementation and validation, based on the project's nature.

LO	Category	Description
2.1	Skill	Develop and follow a feasible project plan including goal structure, timeline, work distribution, risk management, communication and quality assurance.
2.2	Skill	Apply engineering methods and tools to develop, analyse and compare alternative solutions, and justify choices with traceable and critical argumentation.
2.3	Skill	Critically and systematically use knowledge to validate project results — e.g. through simulation, experiment, prototype, test, data-driven analysis or expert review.
2.4	Skill	Document the project in an English technical report with clear traceability from requirements to results, and communicate results orally to both technical and non-technical audiences.
2.5	Skill	Collaborate professionally in multidisciplinary and intercultural teams, applying structured forms of meetings, decision-making and conflict resolution.
3.1	Attitude	Identify and evaluate sustainability aspects, safety, ethics and societal consequences relevant to the project's solution and recommendations.
3.2	Attitude	Critically evaluate the team's working methods and identify improvement actions based on feedback, data and peer review.

Assessment and Grading

Assessment Components

The course is assessed through two mandatory components. Both must be passed (grade E or higher) to pass the course. The final grade is a weighted average of the two components.

Assessment Component	Credits	Learning Outcomes	Scale
Project Process & Implementation	8 hp	2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 3.2	A–F
Project Portfolio incl. Technical Documentation & Oral Presentation	12 hp	1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1	A–F
TOTAL	**20 hp**	—	A–F

Component 1: Project Process and Implementation (8 hp)
This component assesses how well you work as an engineering team throughout the semester. It evaluates your process, not just your end product. Evidence is gathered continuously through supervisor observations, submitted assignments, meeting logs, peer review, and the quality of your iterative work.

Key areas assessed:

- Project planning — quality of your project plan, timeline, and risk management
- Engineering methods — systematic use of methods for analysis, design and validation
- Team collaboration — professional behaviour, communication, and conflict resolution in a multicultural team
- Self-assessment and improvement — reflection on process and ability to adjust based on feedback

Component 2: Project Portfolio, Technical Documentation and Oral Presentation (12 hp)
This component assesses the quality of your project outcomes: the technical report and the oral defence. Together, these demonstrate your engineering knowledge, analytical rigour, and ability to communicate results to different audiences.

Key areas assessed:

- Problem framing and theoretical context
- Justified methodology and traceable decision-making
- Quality and depth of technical work and validation
- Sustainability, ethics and societal impact analysis
- Report quality: structure, language, figures, references
- Oral presentation: clarity, confidence, ability to answer questions

Grading Criteria (Overview)
The table below provides a simplified overview of grade expectations. Detailed rubrics for each submission will be provided on the course platform.

Criterion	A – Excellent	C – Good	E – Adequate	F – Fail
Problem Framing	Precise, nuanced, strongly contextualised	Adequate, minor gaps	Minimal but present	Absent
Methodology	Rigorous, well-justified, critically evaluated	Reasonable, minor weaknesses	Applied but insufficiently explained	Not applied

Criterion	A – Excellent	C – Good	E – Adequate	F – Fail
Technical Work	Innovative, thorough, validated systematically	Satisfactory, validation attempted	Completed at minimum level	Not completed
Report Quality	Excellent structure, language, traceability	Readable, minor issues	Basic quality, present	Unacceptable
Sustainability / Ethics	Deeply integrated, insightful analysis	Mentioned with discussion	Identified	Absent
Team Reflection	Deep, critical, actionable insights	Reflective with examples	Present but superficial	Absent

Re-examination

Re-examination takes place at the next course occasion. Since EPS is a project-based course, re-examination typically involves submitting a revised report or a supplementary written assignment, as decided by the examiner.

Project Work Structure

The Mission–Goals–Scope (MGS) Framework

Every EPS project at HB is structured around a Mission–Goals–Scope (MGS) statement, which your team develops in the early weeks of the semester. This document is the foundation of all your work.

- Mission: A concise one-sentence statement of what your team is trying to achieve and for whom.
- Goals: 3–6 measurable, concrete objectives that together fulfil the mission.
- Scope: Clear boundaries — what is included and what is excluded from this semester's work.

Your MGS statement will likely evolve as you learn more about the problem. Expect to revise it at least once. When significant changes are made, inform your supervisor and update the document. The final MGS is the reference point for your project report and oral defence.

Engineering Methods

Depending on your project type, you are expected to apply one or more recognised engineering methods for investigation, design, and validation. Suitable approaches include:

- Design thinking (Empathize–Define–Ideate–Prototype–Test)
- Systems engineering and requirements management
- Experimental design and data collection
- Simulation, modelling, or computational analysis
- Prototyping and iterative development
- Literature-based research and theoretical analysis

Whatever method you choose, you must justify your choice in the report and document how you applied it. Blind application of a method without reflection is not sufficient for a good grade.

Visual Communication

Engineering communication is largely visual. From Week 2 onwards, use diagrams, flowcharts, sketches, tables, and other visual tools to communicate your progress, design decisions, and results. Every supervisor meeting should include at least one visual that summarises where you are in the project and what decisions you have made since last time.

Teamwork and Group Dynamics

EPS teams are deliberately diverse — in discipline, culture, and background. This is a strength, not a complication. However, it requires deliberate effort to function well.

Group Contract: In the first two weeks, your team must write and sign a Group Contract covering: expected working hours, communication tools and norms, decision-making procedures, consequences for late work, and how disagreements will be resolved. The group contract is not submitted for grading, but your supervisor will review it.

Cultural awareness: During the first week, your team will complete a structured exercise exploring different academic traditions, professional expectations, and communication styles. Note that Swedish higher education typically involves a more informal student-teacher relationship than in many other countries. Address your supervisors by first name unless told otherwise.

Semester Timeline and Milestones

The semester is divided into six broad phases. All milestones are mandatory.

Week	Phase	Key Activities	Deliverable / Milestone
1–2	**Orientation**	Introduction, team formation, project briefing, cultural exchange, group contract	M1: Group contract & initial scope
2–4	**Problem Definition**	Literature research, stakeholder mapping, initial MGS statement	M2: MGS document submitted

Week	Phase	Key Activities	Deliverable / Milestone
5–9	**Investigation & Design**	Deep research, methodology selection, design iterations, visual progress diagrams	M3: Mid-semester pitch presentation (approx. Week 9)
10–14	**Development & Testing**	Prototype / analysis / implementation, validation, iterative improvement	M4: Draft report submitted for feedback
15–17	**Finalisation**	Report writing, peer review, revisions, preparation of final presentation	M5: Final report submitted
18	**Oral Defence**	Oral presentation and Q&A with internal and external examiner	M6: Oral defence completed

The Mid-Semester Pitch (Milestone 3)

The mid-semester presentation at approximately Week 9 is not a progress update — it is a pitch. You must present your project as if you are selling it to a senior manager or client who does not know the details. Focus on what problem you are solving and why it matters; what your team has decided to do and why; and what you expect to deliver by the end of the semester.

Supervisor Meetings

You should expect to meet your supervisor approximately once a week throughout the semester — around 10 meetings in total. It is your team's responsibility to: request and schedule meetings in advance; prepare an agenda and at least one visual progress summary; and follow up after each meeting with a brief written summary (3–5 lines) of decisions made.

In addition to supervisor meetings, mentor check-ins will be held every 3–4 weeks. These shorter sessions (approximately 30 minutes) focus on team dynamics and the student experience rather than technical content.

Feedback on Drafts

Submit early drafts — do not wait until you have a complete report. Supervisors will provide targeted feedback on submitted drafts; expect four specific, focused comments per submission. When you receive feedback, do not simply make the specific changes suggested — use the feedback as a signal about a broader issue and revise accordingly.

Report Requirements

Overview

The project report is a group deliverable and the primary evidence for Component 2. It must be written in English and submitted as a single PDF document via the course platform. Target length: 10,000–15,000 words of body text (excluding cover page, table of contents, figures, tables, and references). Appendices do not count towards the word limit.

Report Structure

Section	Status	Notes
Cover Page	Required	Title, course code (A361TG), team names, supervisor(s), date
Abstract (English)	Required	150–250 words; problem, approach, key results, conclusions
Table of Contents	Required	Auto-generated; include page numbers
1. Introduction	Required	Background and context, problem statement, aim and objectives, scope and limitations
2. Project Management	Required	Team description, working methods, MGS statement, risk management
3. Research / Theory	Required	Literature review, technical background, theoretical framework
4. Methodology	Required	Methods chosen and justification, tools, data sources
5. Work / Development	Required	Design, implementation, prototyping, analysis — the core project work
6. Results & Discussion	Required	Findings, validation, critical discussion of results and limitations
7. Conclusions	Required	Summary of achievements, relation to objectives, recommendations for future work
8. Sustainability & Ethics	Required	Sustainability aspects, ethical considerations, societal impact
9. Group Reflection	Required	Team collaboration, cultural experiences, learning outcomes
References	Required	APA format or Harvard; minimum 8 references, at least 5 peer-reviewed
Appendices	If relevant	Raw data, detailed drawings, additional tables, code

Formatting Requirements

- Font: Arial, body 11 pt, headings as per template
- Page size: A4, margins approximately 2.5 cm top/bottom, 3 cm left, 2 cm right
- Headings: University of Borås navy blue (#003865)
- Page numbers: footer, right-aligned
- Table and figure captions: below the figure/table
- Line spacing: 1.15 for body text

References

All sources must be cited using Harvard or APA. The minimum expectation is 8 cited references, at least 5 of which should be peer-reviewed academic sources. Sources must be cited consistently in the body text and listed in full in the References section.

Sustainability, Safety and Ethics

Every report must include a dedicated section (Section 8) addressing: sustainability (environmental, social and economic dimensions — use a recognised framework such as UN SDGs, LCA principles, or circular economy); safety (risks associated with your design or recommendations, and how they are mitigated); and ethics (data, stakeholders, intellectual property, or the use of your solution). The best reports integrate these considerations throughout the work.

Oral Presentation and Defence

The oral presentation takes place in Week 18. It consists of a group presentation followed by a Q&A session with the internal examiner, external examiner, and supervisor.

Format: Total time approximately 30 minutes per group. Presentation: maximum 15 minutes. Q&A: approximately 15 minutes. All group members must participate in both parts.

Content: Do not simply summarise the report — assume the examiners have read it. Focus on your most important findings and decisions; how you validated your results; what you would do differently; and what should happen next.

What examiners look for: Deep understanding beyond the report; ability to articulate and justify engineering decisions; honest acknowledgement of limitations; evidence of genuine learning and reflection.

Academic Integrity and Use of AI

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty

All work submitted must be your own. Plagiarism — copying text or ideas from any source without proper citation — is a serious academic offence and may result in disciplinary action. The University of Borås uses plagiarism detection software on all submitted reports.

Proper citation applies to all sources, including websites, product datasheets, images, and AI-generated text. When in doubt, cite.

Use of Generative AI

The University of Borås follows Swedish higher education guidelines on the use of generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT, Copilot, or similar). As a general principle:

- AI tools may be used as a support for brainstorming, language editing, code assistance, or literature discovery — not for generating substantive technical analysis or conclusions.
- Any use of AI-generated text in your report must be disclosed in an appendix or methods section, specifying which tool was used and how.
- You are fully responsible for the accuracy of all content in your report, regardless of how it was generated.

If you are unsure whether a specific use of an AI tool is acceptable, ask your supervisor before submitting.

EPS Student Handbook

This handbook is your complete guide to the European Project Semester (EPS) at the University of Borås. It covers everything you need to know from your first day to your final oral defence.

EPS is a full-semester, project-based programme where international and multidisciplinary student teams solve real engineering challenges in collaboration with industry and research partners. At the University of Borås — the only Swedish institution in the European EPS network — the programme combines a major interdisciplinary engineering project with four supporting courses in project management, sustainable development, popular science communication, and Swedish language and culture.

This handbook guides you through the 20-week semester step by step: from team formation and problem scoping, through design and development, to the final technical report and oral defence. It covers the structure, learning outcomes, assessment requirements, and practical expectations of the main project course in depth, with an overview of the supporting courses and how they connect to your project work.

University of Borås · Valid from Autumn 2026

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