

## MA in Social Science

### ● Programme overview

The Master's degree in Social Science (MA SSc) at Neuchâtel offers students an interdisciplinary programme found nowhere else in Switzerland. Using innovative teaching methods based on cutting-edge research in the social sciences, the programme trains students to reflect on the pressing issues faced by contemporary societies. Our approach is creative and critical, informing and informed by current debates.

The MA SSc puts circulation and change at the heart of the social processes investigated:

- the **circulation of people**, as shaped by migration and asylum policy, processes of inclusion and exclusion, citizenship and new forms of spatial mobility;
- the **circulation of knowledge**, as a cause and effect of social innovation, digitisation and the globalisation of education;
- the **circulation of wealth**, includes topics such as social inequality, financialisation of the economy and alternative economic imaginaries.

### ● Programme structure: required and optional modules

The MA in Social Science (both the 90 and 120 ECTS credit programmes) is made up of:

- an interdisciplinary core curriculum module;
- a principal specialisation, which can be disciplinary or thematic (anthropology, human geography, migration and citizenship, psychology and education, and sociology).

### ● Interdisciplinary core curriculum module

#### Thématiques

The core curriculum has three different components:

- cross-curricular courses, common to all specialisations, revolving around the circulation of people, knowledge and wealth;
- courses in research and qualitative/quantitative methods, providing tools for social analysis;
- interdisciplinary seminars taught by at least two teachers from different disciplines within the MA SSc programme.

#### Aims

The core curriculum module allow students to learn and apply interdisciplinary approaches in a directed, hands-on manner.

#### Neuchâtel's strengths

This interdisciplinary experience, highly structured and responsive to the contributions of each discipline, is unique not only within Switzerland but internationally. The programme provides tools that are essential for understanding the challenges faced by contemporary societies.



### Degree Awarded

Master of Arts in Social Science  
(Master of Arts en sciences sociales)

### Credits

90 to 120 ECTS credits, 3 to 4 semesters

### Teaching languages

French and English

### Admission criteria

Holders of a Bachelor's degree in Arts and Humanities from the University of Neuchâtel or a degree from another Swiss university that the Faculty deems equivalent will be unconditionally accepted within the Master's specialisation if they have acquired 60 ECTS credits in the relevant field of study. Holders of a Bachelor's degree from a foreign university or in a subject other than the principal or secondary master's specialisation may also be admitted, although the Faculty may request that additional study be undertaken.

### Application deadline

To start in autumn (mid-September): August 1 for University of Neuchâtel students; April 30 for students of other universities

To start in spring (February): November 30

### Student registration

Bureau des immatriculations  
Av. du 1<sup>er</sup>-Mars 26, CH-2000 Neuchâtel  
+41 32 718 10 00  
[www.unine.ch/immatriculation](http://www.unine.ch/immatriculation)

### Contact and information

Secrétariat de la Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines  
Espace Tilo-Frey 1, CH-2000 Neuchâtel  
+41 32 718 17 00  
[secretariat.lettres@unine.ch](mailto:secretariat.lettres@unine.ch)

### Studies advice

+41 32 718 18 30  
[conseil.lettres@unine.ch](mailto:conseil.lettres@unine.ch)

## ● With specialisation in:

### ● Anthropology

#### Topics

- political anthropology of agricultural and environmental issues;
- socio-anthropology of migration, international aid and development in postcolonial societies;
- socio-anthropology of art, culture and heritage.

#### Aims

This specialisation trains students to analyse the challenges of our era from an empirical and ethnographic standpoint. Students acquire:

- the ability to analyse socio-political change in key areas of the global policy agenda, and to reflect on how anthropological knowledge can be responsibly applied in these areas;
- the ability to de-center one's analytic perspective, through long-term study and reflexivity;
- for those interested, the possibility to work closely with the Neuchâtel Ethnography Museum in the areas of museography, ethnographic film and ethnomusicology.

#### Neuchâtel's strengths

The specialisation offers two areas for professionalisation that are unique in Switzerland:

- 'Careers in culture', which gives students the opportunity to create a film or a museum exhibition;
- 'The anthropology of social and environmental action', in which students carry out an internship with an NGO or an administrative body in relation to their MA thesis.

### ● Human Geography

#### Topics

This specialisation takes the geography of today's greatest challenges as its general theme. It trains students to analyse the key issues confronting today's societies, such as digitisation, global urbanisation, migration and climate change.

#### Aims

The Human Geography specialisation provides students with:

- the ability to analyse critically the geographical aspects of the underlying changes in today's societies;
- the means to develop relevant and innovative solutions to society's principal problems (security, urbanisation, migration, climate change);
- in-depth mastery of the qualitative and quantitative methods students are likely to encounter in their future careers.

#### Neuchâtel's strengths

The teaching staff is particularly interested in addressing topical issues and engaging in public debate (such as print media, audio-visual media, blogs and so on), and is active in cutting-edge geographical research.

### ● Migration and Citizenship

#### Topics

The specialisation applies an interdisciplinary perspective to two issues central to modern society: the movement of people, and the socio-economic and political integration of societies. These issues are intrinsically linked to the future organisation of nation states, and how they relate to transnational phenomena, be they personal, economic, legal or political.

#### Aims

The specialisation allows students to hone and expand on their Bachelor's level knowledge, not only by integrating an interdisciplinary approach, but also by specialising in the study of migration and the theory and practice of citizenship, mobility, migration policy and transnationalism. The seminars systematically address topical issues relating to debates on migration. The specialisation also teaches

advanced skills in qualitative and/or quantitative methods, as well as providing students with the versatility they will need in their future careers. Le pilier permet également d'acquérir des compétences approfondies en méthodes qualitatives et/ou quantitatives ainsi qu'une polyvalence pour de futures activités professionnelles.

#### Neuchâtel's strengths

Neuchâtel is the only Swiss university offering a specialised programme of study in Migration and Citizenship. With its *nccr – on the move* (National Centre of Competence in Research), the University of Neuchâtel has strengthened its research role within Switzerland, giving students the chance to engage with new people and ideas.

### ● Psychology and Education

#### Topics

The Psychology and Education specialisation teaches the sociocultural psychology of development, enabling students to study life trajectories, reasoning, memory and imagination, educational or workplace interactions, and institutional arrangements.

#### Aims

The specialisation allows you to:

- acquire advanced knowledge, both classical and contemporary;
- develop an analytical mindset and argumentation skills, with group reflection among peers and experts;
- master the tools of research and intervention, while engaging with epistemological and ethical concerns;
- define your own unique project, according to your interests.

#### Neuchâtel's strengths

The specialisation offers a programme of sociocultural and interdisciplinary psychology that is unique in Europe, reflecting the Institute of Psychology and Education's cutting-edge research.

### ● Sociology

#### Topics

This specialisation develops theoretical skills in sociology by applying them to the greatest challenges in the modern world. It considers today's socio-economic changes from a number of different angles: economic sociology (markets and consumption); inequality; globalisation; new technologies; and the processes of political and social disputes.

#### Aims

The Sociology specialisation provides you with:

- the ability to identify and question the social issues and challenges facing us today;
- expertise in a variety of conceptual, theoretical and methodological approaches;
- the autonomous project management skills that are needed in many jobs in a variety of economic sectors.

#### Neuchâtel's strengths

The University of Neuchâtel's Sociology programme is remarkable for its empirical orientation, its focus on economic sociology and inequality, and the availability and approachability of its teaching staff.

## ● Career prospects

The Master in Social Science helps you develop a variety of cross-disciplinary skills such as analytical capabilities, critical thinking, reflectiveness, investigative work, and the monitoring and evaluation of numerous forms of socio-technical intervention. Alumni work in public administrative bodies, federal and cantonal ministries, private companies and non-governmental and international organisation in a wide array of social, cultural and educational domains. Additionally, all of our specialisations can lead to doctoral degrees for the strongest students at the MA level.