

Karolinska Institutet's language policy

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**Karolinska
Institutet**



Language policy for Karolinska Institutet

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Introduction

Karolinska Institutet (KI) is one of the world's foremost medical universities and has a vision to advance knowledge about life and strive towards better health for all. As a global actor, KI seeks to attract students, teachers and researchers from all over the world. Combining the role as a global university with the responsibilities of a Swedish public authority in its use of language is a challenge. This document outlines the university management's policy and goals for language use and applies to all employees of KI.

Purpose

The purpose of KI's language policy is to:

- provide guidance on language use in all areas of activity
- improve language awareness
- encourage the parallel use of Swedish and English
- promote equal opportunities
- strengthen KI as a global university.

Background principles

The 2009 Language Act (SFS: 2009:2006) stipulates that Swedish is the official language of Sweden and for its public sector. For KI, this means that Swedish is the official language for use in all decision-making contexts, and that the documents written in Swedish takes precedence over translations. Regulation, programme syllabuses, course syllabuses, minutes, decisions and the like shall be written in Swedish but can, if and when necessary, be translated into other languages, primarily English. While the university is required to protect and develop Swedish in its education and research activities, the choice of language must be contextual.

As a public authority and a university, KI has a particular responsibility to promote the development of Swedish terminology within its subject fields. Public authorities are also required to protect and promote the national minority languages and, to a certain extent, use interpreters, as well as translate and make documents accessible.

English is the language of research and science. One of KI's missions is to interact with the wider community in a spirit of mutual exchange, and to actively ensure that the knowledge and skills the university possesses are put to the benefit of society. Since the wider community is not only global but also Swedish-speaking, research and science at KI should also be communicated in Swedish.

Higher education institutions shall also combat and prevent discrimination and promote equal rights and opportunities. Requirements concerning language skills shall therefore be seen in the context of a person's job or studies in order to prevent direct or indirect discrimination.

Four pillars of language use at KI

Language use should rest on four pillars:

- Language awareness means having adequate skills in two or more languages and an awareness that people have differing abilities to understand and use language.
- Parallellingualism means the simultaneous (parallel) use of two or more languages in a way that no one language replaces or infringes upon another.
- Equal opportunities entails supporting inclusion, participation, transparency, equality and diversity by ensuring that language requirements are made in relation to work or studies.
- KI as a global university entails that KI shall be an attractive, welcoming university as much for international as for national students and employees, an ambition for which linguistic inclusion is a precondition.

Language use in KI's fields of activity

Education and learning

In the majority of KI's first and second-cycle courses and programmes, Swedish is the language of education and examination. Some courses are also held in English. Swedish language skills are a requirement for all students on clinical placements (rotations), with the exception of exchange

students. Both Swedish and English are used for teaching and examination on third-cycle programmes.

For courses that have Swedish as the language of examination, the syllabus should always make clear that teaching can be done in English. When necessary, Swedish and English are to be used in tandem so that everyone can be included in the learning process and in teamwork activities. Teaching staff should be offered pedagogical support in developing their language skills so that they may provide quality education in both Swedish and English.

Licentiate dissertations and doctoral theses should be summarised in both Swedish and English to promote terminological development and knowledge dissemination. International students and doctoral students shall be informed of the opportunities in place to study Swedish, which is essential to their further studies and careers in Sweden.

Research

English is the main language in the research field and good English skills are essential. However, education in Swedish should be encouraged in order to promote collaboration and knowledge dissemination in Sweden.

Researchers shall be informed of the language requirements for different academic assignments and positions, as well as the opportunities available for language support and skills development. Researchers should be encouraged to make the results of their research available in both English and Swedish to aid terminological development and knowledge dissemination. Abstracts in languages other than Swedish and English are welcomed.

Communication

KI's outreach activities help to raise public knowledge of and trust in its educational and research activities at home and abroad. The language of the public sector is to be cultivated, simple and comprehensible.

Parallellilingualism is essential to enabling students and staff to engage in dialogue and interact with others. Information for staff should always be provided in both Swedish and English. When hiring and employing, the

language requirements pertaining to the position must be explained and information provided on the opportunities available for skills development in Swedish and in English.

KI's central website shall represent all of KI. All content should be made available to the greatest possible extent in both Swedish and English. Other communication channels shall also work towards making sure that their target readers can access the information in both Swedish and English.