



**LUND**  
UNIVERSITY

Vice-Chancellor

## Lund University Language Policy

*Approved by the Vice-Chancellor 19 June 2014*

### Introduction

The Swedish parliament has adopted a Language Act (2009:600) which addresses the responsibility of public authorities for the Swedish language. In addition to its role as a Swedish public authority, Lund University is an international environment with activities and collaborations conducted in other languages, mainly English, which affect language use. The University's strategic plan prioritises internationalisation for which an important premise is the mastery of language at an appropriate level. Employees and students are to be provided with good conditions for their activities at Lund University and in international contexts. Students and staff from other countries are to feel welcome, to find their way around and function well in study and work environments. For these conditions to be met, the University requires a functioning language environment.

The purpose of this document is to specify interpretations and to clarify the University's position regarding language use. It also aims to promote internationalisation at Lund University.

### General goals

The general goals for Lund University's language policy are *plain language*, *parallel language use* and *multilingualism*.

*Plain language* means that communication uses polished, simple and comprehensible language. Lund University is to have a good level of language use and all communication emanating from the University is to be characterised by plain language, regardless of the language being used. Plain language is to increase both quality and efficiency and contribute to a good reputation within wider society.

*Parallel language use* means that Swedish and English are used side by side. Parallel language use is to enable students and employees to function well at the University and in society, regardless of whether or not they master Swedish.

*Multilingualism* means that the presence of languages other than Swedish and English is to be a natural and welcome feature at Lund University. Multilingualism

among students and employees is a resource and a quality factor. Linguistic diversity is important for an outstanding international University.

## **Guidelines for language use**

### *Language in the public sector*

The basic principle for both written and verbal communication from and within Lund University is that it shall be polished, plain and comprehensible, adapted to the target group, the situation and the communication medium, and to have a respectful tone. The University is to strive to make official language clearer. Certain types of communication, such as those connected to admissions and examinations, place particular demands on clarity.<sup>1</sup>

The Language Act prescribes Swedish as the language of the public sector in Sweden, and public authorities have a special responsibility for making Swedish terminology in their various areas of expertise accessible, and ensuring that it is used and developed. Access to information in the common language of Swedish is a question of democracy.

Pursuant to the Language Act, information about the University's activities which is intended for the general public is to be available in Swedish. The Act also entails that minutes from meetings, decisions, regulations, approved annual reports and similar documents that the University is obliged to produce, in compliance with administrative legislation, must be written in Swedish. The principal rule is also that other important documents which are dispatched, thereby becoming public documents, are to be produced in Swedish. One exception to this principle applies to agreements or similar documents drawn up together with international agents, which are usually produced in English. Another exception concerns doctoral theses, which can be written in the established language of the relevant discipline. It must be possible to connect a public document which has been translated into another language to a Swedish original, and the translated version has no legal validity. This means that documents such as general syllabi and course syllabi for programmes offered in languages other than Swedish are to be written and approved in Swedish. For a programme which is offered together with an international higher education institution, at least the syllabi for the parts of the programme organised by Lund University are to be written and approved in Swedish.

As a rule, meetings at Lund University are to be held in Swedish. Exceptions can be made when one or several participants in the meeting do not master Swedish, in which case the meeting can be entirely or partly held in English.

To the greatest possible extent, in its exercise of public authority with regard to an individual, the University is to make an interpreter available to non-Swedish speakers. Lund University is to offer sign-language interpretation where necessary. Otherwise, the need for interpretation is to be assessed on a case by case basis.

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<sup>1</sup> Approved aids are available, such as the latest edition of the Swedish Academy's glossary, the rules of written Swedish from the Institute for Language and Folklore, rules for written Swedish and English from the Swedish Centre for Terminology and the Swedish collocations dictionary, Svensk handordbok

### *English at Lund University*

Lund University constitutes a part of an international academic environment, and the dominant international research language is English. English is also the most important language for international educational collaborations and other forms of international cooperation. The Language Act's requirement for Swedish as the public sector language does not stand in contradiction with this practice.

The University includes environments with researchers, lecturers or students who do not speak Swedish. Consequently, information and good communication are needed not only in Swedish but also in English. A good environment of parallel language use contributes to attracting staff and students from other countries, and allowing them to find their way around and to function effectively. In addition, it contributes to retaining skilled staff. The University is to offer all students secure study environments and fair study conditions. All employees are likewise to be offered secure work environments and working conditions, as well as fair recruitment processes. This means that relevant information is to be available in English as well as Swedish, and that the University is to be able to communicate in both languages.

The norm for official texts of a general nature at Lund University is British English. If there are different variants, the BE version is to be preferred for the names of activities and units, titles, names of organisations and higher education terminology.<sup>2</sup>

### *A Nordic context*

By tradition, students from other countries within the Nordic area have been allowed to use Danish or Norwegian as their language of examination in Sweden, out of regard for Nordic cooperation. This is to be recognised as far as possible at Lund University. Application documents received in another Nordic language are to be translated by the University where required.

### *Scholarly tradition*

Lund University is to maintain the tradition of conducting parts of its doctoral degree conferment ceremony in Latin and issuing the associated diplomas in Latin. The use of Latin is also to continue in a small number of other contexts, such as the names of buildings and journal series.

### *National minority languages*

As a public authority, the University has a responsibility for informing people about the language rights of Swedish minorities.<sup>3</sup> In case of issues concerning one

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<sup>2</sup> When reference is made to the University's buildings in English in internal contexts, the Swedish building name is to be used, e.g. "Byrålogen". In external contexts, it is usually necessary to add descriptive or clarifying words, such as "the Byrålogen Office Building". Lund University has developed its own support system for the English usage, AWELU (Academic Writing in English at Lund University; <http://www.ark.lu.se/utbildning/studentinformation/att-skriva-pa-engelska-awelu/>) and the Swedish Council for Higher Education has a Swedish-English online glossary (<http://www.uhr.se/sv/Om-UHR/Svensk-engelsk-ordbok/>). Where necessary, the Translation and Language Service can be consulted as their responsibilities include establishing English equivalents for Lund University terminology, in consultation with the units concerned.

<sup>3</sup> The national minorities in Sweden are Jews, Roma, Sami, Sweden Finns and Tornedalers and the national minority languages are Finnish, Yiddish, Meänkieli, Romani Chib and Sami.

of the national minorities, the University is to consult the relevant minority group, to the extent possible. The University has been given national responsibility for maintaining the expertise to develop and provide teaching, but also to conduct research, in the national minority language of Yiddish.

#### *Language skills*

Language use at Lund University is to be at such a level as to contribute to reinforcing the University's reputation in wider society and to making the University into an attractive study environment and workplace. It is to be functional in its context, and to contribute to self-esteem among employees and students, which benefits the work environment at the University.

Good language use presupposes adequate linguistic expertise within teaching, research and administration. Employees are to have skills in Swedish at the appropriate level to carry out their work duties satisfactorily. Knowledge of Swedish among internationally recruited students and staff improves opportunities for a career within the University as well as employability and integration in Swedish society. International employees and students who plan to stay in Sweden for less than one year, and are therefore not offered tuition in Swedish for immigrants, are to be offered Swedish courses.

Good knowledge of foreign languages within the University, primarily English, contributes to providing the University's employees and students with favourable conditions for asserting themselves internationally within studies, research projects, cooperation projects and on the labour market. All students and employees are to feel welcome, included and able to function well in study and work environments. It is therefore important for employees to have English skills at the appropriate level to be able to carry out their work duties. The ability of lecturers to teach in English and that of administrators to communicate in English is to be improved. Employees and students are to be offered the opportunity to reinforce their language skills, especially with regard to English.

#### *Education*

Swedish is currently the main language of instruction at the undergraduate level, except in foreign language tuition. At the Master's level, entire programmes are to a greater extent taught mainly in English. At the research studies level, teaching is often more individualised and language use varies. For the undergraduate and Master's levels, the language of instruction and the conditions for changing it are to be clearly stated in programme and course syllabi. The programme and course syllabi are to be translated and made available in English, in order to facilitate international comparisons and mobility, among other things. Course titles, even for course modules, are to be registered in Ladok in both Swedish and English. The University is to develop more degree programmes in English.

In education at the research level, doctoral students are to be offered training in academic writing and research communication in Swedish and English. All doctoral theses at Lund University are to have at least two abstracts, one in Swedish and one in English. Individual study plans are to be translated into English as necessary.

*Research*

All Swedish-speaking researchers at Lund University are to be able to present their research findings in good and comprehensible Swedish. The University is to work towards a well-developed system for arranging help with editing and proof-reading of abstracts of research findings in both Swedish and English.

*Signage in public spaces*

All indoor signage must be in Swedish; to the greatest extent possible, both Swedish and English are to be used in parallel. Outdoor signage is to be in Swedish, with the aim of having all outdoor signage also in both Swedish and English.

*Language use on the internet*

Language on the internet is to be adapted to the user's perspective, without contradicting educational goals or accepted legal, linguistic or social norms. All online texts are to be produced with the support of well-established and current tools such as the E-delegation's guidelines for web development.