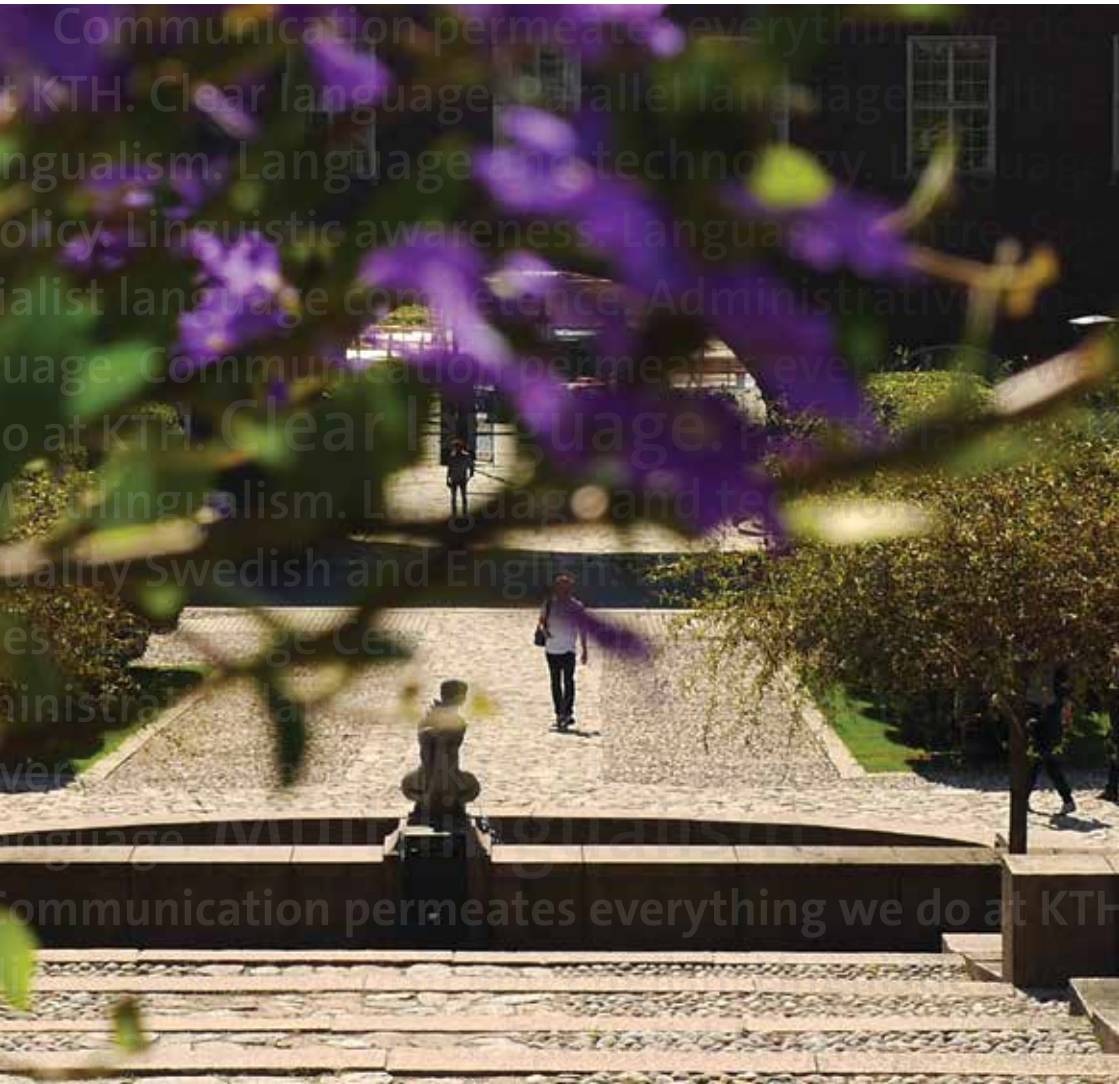





KTH's Language Policy





Language and technology go hand in hand

Communication permeates everything we do at KTH. Our vision is a parallel-language KTH where high-quality Swedish and English are used side by side, where communication is clear and effective and where students and staff can develop their linguistic skills in Swedish, English, and other languages, both in their subject area and in general.

Since 2010, KTH has had a language policy, a document that should increase the linguistic awareness of students and staff and be an aid in KTH's endeavor to develop into a multilingual Swedish and international university.

KTH's overall goal and strongest driving force is to achieve excellence in education and research.

This goal requires KTH to act wisely and insightfully in all its work, whether at the local, national, or international level.

A language policy was adopted by the rector and the university board in 2010. The same year, the language committee was appointed to be responsible for the implementation of this language policy in KTH's activities and to give advice on language questions in general.

We hope that this brochure about KTH's language policy will help you in your daily work at KTH!

Language Committee



Summary

KTH's language policy can be summarised in three key ideas: clear language, parallelism, and multilingualism.

Clear language means communication takes place with literate, simple, and understandable language. All communication from KTH (as a university) should be both high quality and clearly understood, regardless of the language used. Clear language will increase both quality and efficiency and contribute to a good reputation in the outside world.

By parallel language we mean that Swedish and English are used side by side. Parallel language should enable students and employees to work well at the university and in society, whether or not they are native Swedish speakers.

Multilingualism means that the presence of languages other than Swedish and English should be an obvious and welcome element at KTH. Multilingualism among students and employees is a resource and a quality factor. Linguistic diversity is important for a prominent international university.

“Government agencies have a special responsibility for ensuring that Swedish terminology in their various areas of expertise is accessible, and that it is used and developed.”

Language Act (2009:600)

The Five Aspects of the Language Policy

1. KTH in the World

Education and research at KTH are highly internationalised. The internationalisation of the education is in itself a quality factor that contributes to the personal development and employability of the students. KTH receives many students from abroad. This creates multicultural student groups, contributing to internationalisation. KTH strives to be an attractive environment for distinguished faculty from all over the world.

When working with internationalisation in education, it is important to strike a correct linguistic balance between the needs of the various student groups. By creating good opportunities for staff and students to be able to express themselves in both Swedish and English within science and technology, KTH will contribute to internationalisation through more effective learning and communication, greater understanding for science and technology in the community, a more positive image among teachers and teenagers in primary and secondary school, better opportunities for faculty to take part in public discussion of social issues, and better opportunities to utilise research findings in society. A prerequisite for KTH to offer its education to international students is that they are also offered education in English.

2. KTH and Quality in Education

Since education at KTH contains elements of both Swedish and English, students with Swedish as their mother tongue will acquire certain passive language knowledge, for instance in English, certain specialist terminology, and correspondingly, international students will come into contact with Swedish.

KTH presupposes, however, that course aims are best achieved if the students assume a depth-oriented approach to their learning, which is supported by, among other things, good linguistic communication among students and between students and faculty. A more conscious use of Swedish and English can, therefore, improve the efficiency not only of learning but also of other in-house communication within KTH.

However, one should be aware that some studies have shown communication in a language other than one's mother tongue is less effective and results in inferior understanding compared to communication in the mother tongue. As a consequence of the increasingly international labour market it is a strict quality requirement that graduated engineers and architects should be able to use English as a working language.



3. KTH and the Language of Science

The role of the university as a conveyor of knowledge requires a good command of language from those who are to present and conduct discussions on this knowledge. With increasing technical possibilities for communication, higher demands are placed on those who are to reach out to the community and represent KTH, as staff or as present or former students. Good language skills provide an edge in competing for attention. If the university and its representatives are to participate satisfactorily in public discussions, simple, clear language is a prerequisite. Graduates from KTH, therefore, need to master their subjects both in Swedish and English - in other words, they need parallel language competence.

Research at KTH normally uses English as the language of publication and often as the working language. This is a necessary condition for internationalising science and technology, and good knowledge of English is thus essential for staff and students alike.

However, good knowledge of Swedish is also needed in day-to-day work, in education, and in contacts with the surrounding community. The university should not contribute towards Swedish becoming a low language and English a high language. Both languages are needed.

Both students and faculty may exhibit deficiencies in their general technical vocabulary and the patterns of construction, sentence structure, and style of scientific Swedish. This may lead to an inability to conduct a discussion even on the level of popular science in Swedish. Such domain losses for Swedish may have serious consequences for the universities' contacts, for the standard of general education and, by extension, for democracy. This may also affect the training of teachers for primary and secondary schools. To counteract such a development, KTH should draw attention to the question of scientific Swedish in its education and promote the development of Swedish terminology in its areas of activity.

4. KTH and Diversity

Increased diversity at KTH is positive from social, cultural, and operational points of view. At the same time, the choice of language sets limitations on integration between Swedish-speaking and non-Swedish-speaking staff. Many international doctoral students, post-docs, and guest researchers may feel excluded, with few social contacts in the workplace beyond their closest colleagues. Faculty who do not know Swedish find it difficult to meet the requirements for promotion and are normally not considered for leadership assignments. KTH can counteract this by lowering the barriers raised by the choice of language.

Integration is also a matter of integration into Swedish society and the Swedish job market. To address this, KTH will facilitate the process for international students, doctoral students, and faculty to acquire the language prerequisites necessary for them to settle permanently in Sweden. It is even more important that the level of ambition of all employees is high with regard to reception and integration into the activities of the University.



5. KTH and the Language Act

As of 1 July 2009, a new Language Act is in force. Among other things, it states that Swedish is the main language in Sweden, that the language of official business must be Swedish, and that it must be clear, carefully worded, correct, simple, and understandable. Moreover, authorities have a particular responsibility to ensure that Swedish terminology in their various specialist areas is available, used, and developed. KTH will naturally observe the Language Act. The Language Policy is an aid both to meeting the requirements of the Language Act and to developing into a multilingual university.

“Clear language is necessary for the communication to work well.”

Viggo Kann, chairperson of the Language Committee

Overarching Goals

The Language Policy of KTH will increase awareness of language among students and employees at KTH and will aid KTH in its efforts to develop into a multilingual university.

1. High linguistic quality

KTH's contacts with students, researchers and the surrounding community are to maintain high linguistic quality.

2. Language competence of the students

First-cycle students

When KTH students graduate with their first degree (Bachelors level, including Bachelor of Science in Engineering) they will have developed a certain degree of competence in specialist language in Swedish and passive specialist language competence in English. Exemptions may be made for programmes taught in English at basic level.

Second-cycle students

The ambition is that engineering and architecture graduates will have developed specialist language competence in both Swedish and English - in other words, parallel language competence. Students who have been admitted after having obtained exemption from the requirement for Swedish will have developed specialist language competence in English. Depending on the language used in their educational programme, they will also have acquired a certain degree of specialist language competence in Swedish.

Third-cycle students

When doctoral students graduate, they must normally master their subject both in Swedish and English. Exceptions may be made for students who have been admitted after having been exempted from the requirement for Swedish.

3. Linguistic competence of faculty

In their teaching, KTH's teachers must be able to communicate effectively and at a high level in speaking and writing in either Swedish or English and preferably both. A good comprehension of both spoken and written Swedish will facilitate taking part in the work of the university and enable a dialogue with the surrounding community. Likewise, a good understanding of English is a precondition for participating in the scientific community.

4. Multilingual education

KTH must offer a balance between Swedish-language and English-language courses and degree programmes. Furthermore, students are to be encouraged to learn other foreign languages.

5. Swedish and English specialist language

Swedish specialist language is to be created and maintained within all research and education areas at KTH, alongside English as a specialist language.

Commitments and Plan of Action

1. Administrative language

The administrative language of KTH is Swedish. KTH is controlled by laws and regulations in Swedish, and all local decisions should be written in Swedish. KTH will endeavour to ensure that English translations of all important strategic and legally binding documents are available. These documents are to be regarded as translations without legal status.

2. High linguistic quality

KTH's main language goal, high linguistic quality, is to be achieved as an integrated part of all education and to be taken into account continuously in all work. It is to be related and adapted to every educational programme. KTH will encourage a continuing discussion of language issues within the university. KTH's contacts with the surrounding community (appearances in the media, talks, popular science articles) are to be carried out in clear, simple, and understandable language.

3. Conscious language choice

KTH's choice of language in its work is to be related to the intended target group. In communication with Swedish-speaking people and Swedish authorities outside the University, Swedish should be used. Information addressed to both Swedish-speaking and non-Swedish-speaking people should be available in Swedish and English (and preferably in other languages). KTH should establish

methods for proofreading and translating Swedish and English texts and, if possible, earmark resources for this work.

Technical equipment and web-based platforms for teaching should be adapted for both Swedish and English. KTH's websites are to provide basic information in both Swedish and English and additionally in other languages if possible, and are to be programmed to enable an interactive choice of language on multi-lingual websites.

4. Students' parallel language competence

Students' language competence is important both for understanding and exchanging ideas. Through the parallel use of Swedish and English in undergraduate education, the students strengthen their knowledge of English, and this is necessary. At the same time, they should acquire good Swedish terminology, which is a precondition for being able to communicate in the subject in Swedish. KTH should, therefore, endeavour to ensure that there are both Swedish and English components in courses at different levels. In third-cycle education, there must be components in both languages to an extent that allows the goal to be fulfilled.

5. Students' communicative competence

Students at all levels must be given the opportunity to systematically practise written and oral communication, in both Swedish and English, with faculty feedback that also concerns language. To ensure that the feedback to the students maintains high quality, faculty are to be offered in-service training in language evaluation.

6. Language centre

To reach the language goal above, a language support activity is needed. Resources should be set aside for a language centre which provides assistance with reports and oral presentations, for example.

7. Bilingual education

During first-cycle education, the greater part of the teaching should be in Swedish, with components in English or another language (e.g., occasional lectures, textbooks) to prepare the students for larger English components later in their education.

Education in the second cycle should normally be taught in English. Second- and third-cycle students who do not speak Swedish should be given the opportunity to learn Swedish in parallel with their subject studies.



8. Examination

Examination constitutes an exercise of public authority. Therefore, students must always have the right to hand in their answers to an examination in Swedish, unless the test concerns knowledge of language and linguistic terminology, irrespective of which language is mainly used in the teaching.

In research the common language is English, hence dissertations at KTH will normally be written in English; therefore, dissertation defences will also normally be conducted in English.

9. Language competence of the employees

Language competence is an important factor in communicative ability. It is KTH's ambition that all permanent employees will be able to understand Swedish sufficiently well to acquaint themselves with decisions and information, and to participate in their in-house activities; it is also self-evident that all faculty must master English sufficiently well to be able



to participate in scientific communication. Newly employed staff who have not mastered the Swedish language are to be offered training in Swedish.

10. Abstracts of dissertations and theses

Every Master's dissertation, licentiate thesis, and doctoral thesis that is written in English is to include an abstract in Swedish. Similarly, every dissertation or thesis written in Swedish is to have an abstract in English.

11. Trial lectures for appointment as a docent

To promote the development and spread of Swedish terminology and to give Swedish-speaking researchers practice in presenting their research in Swedish, it is recommended that researchers give their trial lecture for appointment as a docent in Swedish, unless there are reasons for using some other language.

12. Swedish specialist language

KTH's responsibility for Swedish special terms being created and maintained is shared with all the other seats of learning in Sweden. Through Swedish-language abstracts of doctoral theses and trial lectures for appointment as a docent in Swedish, Swedish terminology will be created and used. KTH should support the work on terminology that is being done on a national level in Sweden. Teaching materials in Swedish are also important in creating and upholding special terminology. In their teaching, faculty should endeavour to use Swedish and to teach Swedish special terms, and in cooperation with colleagues within and outside KTH, create Swedish special terms for new phenomena.

*For more information about language questions,
please visit the Language Committee's website
or contact us by e-mail.*

*Home page: www.kth.se/social/group/sprakkommitten
E-mail: sprakkommitten@kth.se*

*KTH Language and Communication also offers courses in
various languages, rhetoric, writing, trademark design,
and communication.*

*For more information about these courses please visit:
www.kth.se/language*





KTH Language Policy 2017

Production: KTH Language and Communication

Idea and copy: Ida Pinho

Layout and graphic form: Ida Pinho, Jonas Thorén

Photo: Jonas Thorén

Print: US-AB, December 2017