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Language policy for the Royal Institute of Art

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Administration unit responsible	Vice-Chancellor's Office



Language policy for the Royal Institute of Art, 2023

Introduction and purpose of this policy

At the Royal Institute of Art, several languages are spoken among students and staff. The most commonly used languages are Swedish and English. This language policy makes it easy for us to know when we must use Swedish, which is the university college's first language, and in which situations we use English.

The language we use should be polished, simple and understandable. We also have a responsibility under the Language Act (2009:600) to use and develop Swedish terminology in our specialist areas.

The National Minorities and Minority Languages Act gives a person the right to use a minority language when dealing with authorities. The authority is obliged to reply in the same language. The minority languages are Yiddish, Romani Chib, Sami, Finnish and Meänkieli.

The language policy applies to all activities of the Royal Institute of Art when we communicate in speech or in writing.

Languages of the Authority

The Royal Institute of Art is a Swedish authority whose activities are governed by laws and regulations. The language of administration is Swedish and decisions and legally binding documents must be in Swedish. These must be made available, preferably via a document collection on the Royal Institute of Art's intranet and external website. Some documents are made available in English translation. The Head of Administration decides which institution-wide documents are to be translated, how and to what extent. Heads of Department and Heads of Unit decide in the same way which other documents within their respective areas of responsibility are to be translated. In case of need of support to communicate in a minority language contact the Head of Administration.

English versions of legally binding documents, such as contracts, syllabuses, minutes, etc. are translations without legal effect. The language of international agreements is generally English and the original agreement, not a translation, is the binding document.

All meetings at the Royal Institute of Art, except Board of Governors meetings, can be held in English, but meeting minutes containing decisions or proposals for decisions must be in Swedish by law. The convenor and/or chairperson of the meeting decides on the working language. If questions arise, the Head of Unit, Area Manager or Head of Department will be consulted.

In the case of calls and announcements, the language of the application and its various parts must be clearly indicated.

The Royal Institute of Art encourages applicants for certain teaching posts and research grants to submit their applications in English, as members of the Academic Appointments Board or experts are English-speaking. However, applicants may submit their applications in Swedish or another Scandinavian language.



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Language of instruction

The Royal Institute of Art offers two programmes: a five-year programme in Fine Arts and a Master's programme in Fine Arts.

At the bachelor's level in the Five-year programme in Fine Arts, teaching is in both Swedish and English. A compulsory course at the Bachelor's level taught only in Swedish is replaced by an equivalent module in English for students who do not speak Swedish.

At the Master's level teaching is in English. Exceptions are made when all students in a study group speaks Swedish.

Elective courses in both programmes should be given in English if foreign students are participating. If the course element is only given in Swedish, this should be stated in the advertisement.

Further education courses in fine arts and architecture may be given in Swedish and/or English. The language of the course must be clearly stated in the application information and the course syllabus.

Open lectures are given in English as far as possible, but may also be given in Swedish. The language of the lectures will be indicated when the invitation is sent out.

Language skills

All staff at the Royal Institute of Art must have a good knowledge of English. For certain functions, a good knowledge of Swedish is also required.

If there is a need for employees to improve their knowledge of Swedish or English, the line manager may decide that such training is provided in the form of skills development.

Communication between us

The Royal Institute of Art wants to be an international higher education institution where it is as natural to speak English as well as Swedish with each other. When all present are not Swedish speaking, we have chosen English as the common language - regardless of home country or mother tongue. As a Swedish higher education institution and authority, we are required by law to ensure that parts of our documents and information from the higher education institution are in Swedish (see the heading: Language of the Authority). It is important to communicate this clearly to students and staff and that we do so by means of this document, Language Policy for the Royal Institute of Art, and our bilingual intranet.

In addition to complying with the language regulations, it is important that we make an effort to understand each other across language boundaries by listening to and helping each other. In this way, we contribute to a good working and collaborative environment.



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When we write and speak to each other

In conversation, it is important to consider the language we choose so that no one is excluded from the community. At the Royal Institute of Art we help each other to make ourselves understood in conversations and meetings.

Information of an official nature to larger groups internally is given in Swedish. The Swedish text is accompanied by an English translation.

For other internal written information, the working language used is the one determined by the Head of Administration, Head of Unit, Head of Area or Head of Department (examples of groups: course, collegial meetings, working group). When the institution communicates with other authorities or official bodies, Swedish is used. For other external information, languages are chosen according to the context and the recipient.

When we meet in meetings/other gatherings

As in other situations at the university college, bilingualism also applies to meetings. It is important that all participants can contribute, understand and influence the meeting.

The convener of a meeting should decide which language is most appropriate based on who will be attending. For the sake of simplicity, it is advisable to use the same language in meeting notices, during the meeting and in the meeting notes.

Staff meetings, or similar meetings with employees, are held in English when English-speaking employees participate. It is always possible to ask questions or make comments in Swedish at these meetings and the person chairing the meeting will help translate so that everyone understands.

At other joint meetings at the university college where matters of an official nature or topics that have a strong impact on the work situation of employees or the studies of students, the Royal Institute of Art provides interpretation or written translation. For these meetings, an answer on attendance or non-attendance is required as hiring interpreters/interpreting equipment involves a cost and special planning.

Language and bilingualism for the university college's website and intranet, publications, external events and social media are governed by the Royal Institute of Art's Communication Guidelines.

Lexical reference material / glossary

The Swedish-English dictionary of higher education by UHR (Swedish Council for Higher Education) is used for translations of common higher education terms in external and internal communication – [Universitets- och högskolerådets svensk-engelska ordbok för den högre utbildningen](#).

For common expressions used at the Royal Institute of Art, see Royal Institute of Art's wordlist.