

Undergraduate and Graduate Studies in Sweden

Michael Wilson

This brochure attempts to provide you with as much information as possible about the many aspects regarding studying in Sweden. It attempts to provide a comprehensive guide of useful information for exchange students, as well as the student wanting to pursue one of the many degree programs in Sweden.

Table of Contents

Sweden	4
Language.....	4
Landscape	4
This Document.....	4
So you want to be an exchange or international student in Sweden?	5
Living in Sweden	5
Features Peculiar to Sweden	6
A Note on Equality.....	7
Social Life	8
Accommodation	8
Banks and Post Offices	10
Civil Registration.....	11
Currency	11
Drugs and Medication	11
Emergencies and SOS Calls.....	11
ID Cards	12
Local Transportation.....	12
Medical Insurance	12
Opening Hours.....	13
Financing Your Studies	13
Fees and Costs	14
Tuition Fees	14
Student Union Fees	14
Literature and Textbooks	14
Food, Transport and Leisure.....	14
Who Can Work In Sweden?.....	15
Scholarships.....	15
The Guest Scholarship Program	16
Scholarships for advanced university level part of Ph.D. or post-doctoral studies:	17
Scholarships for Master's level programs:	17
What is it like to study in Sweden?	18

What Degrees Can I Study Towards?	19
Study Requirements	19
Undergraduate Studies.....	20
Admission Requirements.....	21
How to Apply?	22
Master's Programs Taught in English	22
Magisterexamen – The Swedish Master's Degree	22
Civilingenjör - Swedish Master of Science.....	23
Admission Requirements.....	23
Applying?	23
Doctoral Programs.....	24
The Swedish PhD	24
Admission Requirements.....	25
How to Apply?	25
Studying in English.....	26
Undergraduate programs and courses.....	26
Master's Programs.....	26
Doctoral Studies/Research Training	26
Studying in Swedish.....	27
Swedish Language Studies.....	27
For Beginners.....	28

Sweden

Sweden is a fascinating country of 9 million inhabitants in the very north of Europe, in a region commonly referred to as Scandinavia. Once a center of Viking activity in ancient times, Sweden is now a politically stable country whose many contributions have contributed to social and technological progress into the 21st century.

Language

The Swedish language is a member of the Northern branch of Germanic languages, of which Icelandic, Norwegian, Danish and Færoese are part. It can be said that Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish are to a degree quite similar. Written versions of Danish and Norwegian are at times indistinguishable. The Swedish alphabet contains 29 roman letters with three special vowel sounds denoted by the letters å ä and ö which occur at the end of the Swedish alphabet.

Landscape

Sweden is a country of astonishing contrasts. Slightly larger than the State of California, the northernmost tip of the country lies above the arctic circle. The rest of the country can be characterized by flat plains in the South, rolling hills in the center, and jagged mountainous terrain in the North.

This Document

This brochure will attempt to provide you with as much information as possible about the many aspects regarding studying in Sweden. It attempts provide a comprehensive guide of useful information for exchange students, as well as the student wanting to pursue one of the many degree programs in Sweden. Cross cultural exchange is one of the most beneficial factors in a university education. Please take advantage of your available opportunity.

So you want to be an exchange or international student in Sweden?

There are compelling reasons why you should consider studying in Sweden.

Sweden has a long and proud history of academic excellence, with outstanding universities dating back to the 15th century. Sweden is the home of the Nobel Prize, the world's most prestigious academic distinction. Today, Sweden's reputation for innovation is built on close cooperation between industry and academia. Swedish universities are renowned for their investigative research and independent thinking, and this reputation is cemented with rigorous quality controls and nationally certified degrees. Sweden has one of the most ambitious educational evaluation programs in Europe, aimed at maintaining this competitive edge.

Swedish universities offer over 150 master degree programs in English, ranging from human rights law to mechanical engineering. Programs are structured in response to student demand; the result is a student-centric education system, with open, informal relations between students and teachers, and where personal initiative and critical thought are prized.

Many students studying in Sweden come from abroad and comprise 7.3% of the student body, according to the OECD; making Sweden **one of the world's most inclusive countries for education**. But there is room for more: The number grew by 64% over the last 3-year period. There are now PhD candidates from some 80 countries working towards their degrees at Swedish universities. Sweden's educational policy is based on the recognition that a multicultural student body is a resource. Competition for places is keen, but students of all nationalities may apply, given the right credentials; and degree equivalency for past studies is granted on a flexible basis.

In Sweden, **tuition fees for students, including graduate students, are fully subsidized by the state, regardless of their nationality**. Sweden's public spending on education is the OECD's highest, at 6.5% of GDP. Of all OECD countries, Sweden spends the most per student on its universities. In 2000, cumulative spending per student over the average duration of a Swedish university education was the equivalent of nearly \$70,000, vs. an OECD mean of around \$40,000. Foreign students are also allowed to work while pursuing their studies in Sweden.

Virtually all Swedes speak fluent English. Many Swedish companies use English as their official working language. Foreign students find that this prevalence of English makes adapting to their new surroundings much easier.

Living in Sweden

Sweden is an open, multicultural society with a long tradition of welcoming foreign students. One in 10 Swedish citizens was born outside of Sweden. Some 26,000 foreign students currently study in Sweden and a very large percentage of Swedish students take part in exchange

programs of some kind. This tradition has helped to create a vibrant, international study environment.

In addition to individual courses, Swedish universities and university colleges offer some 150 full master's programs, all taught in English. You will find that most people, including schoolchildren, speak excellent English and perhaps even a third or a fourth. German is a very important language of commerce in the Nordic countries. Many foreign students find these aspects of life in Sweden helpful during the first part of their stay, a period that can be as challenging as it is exciting. However, as you get used to being a student in Sweden you will find that the country itself has a lot to offer and you will have ample opportunity to make new friends and learn about Swedish society and culture.

Features Peculiar to Sweden

Every country has its own distinctive characteristics. What you find most peculiar about Sweden will obviously depend on your own cultural background. Sweden has long been an open and accepting society and international influences have shaped and enriched Swedish culture. As in all cultures, however, many old customs and usages remain; foreigners may at times find these unusual, puzzling or even amusing.

Swedes are generally held to be very punctual, law abiding and respectful of rules and regulations. Smoking, for instance, is not permitted in public places such as banks, post offices or in shops. These restrictions are respected. When Swedes wait for something they usually form queues. Queuing systems have been installed in many shops and most banks and post offices. Customers take numbered tickets from a dispensing machine and wait until their number comes up on a display. Bank clerks will simply ignore you if you don't have a queue ticket. If you're in a large store and there is no queue, look for tickets and a number display. This may seem strange at first but it usually ensures quicker service.

The habit of forming queues may in part stem from the importance attached to egalitarianism in Swedish political thought and practice which, in turn, has permeated most aspects of Swedish society. This is reflected in the large number of women represented in parliament and government but is also apparent in everyday occupations. For example, people are normally expected to pay for their share when eating out with colleagues or friends, and tend to calculate the exact amount they owe. As a foreign woman you may be surprised to find that your Swedish date does not offer to pay for you. By the same token, Swedish women may insist on paying for themselves. However, many Swedish women still respond positively to a bit of old-fashioned courtship. On the other hand, it is not unusual for men and women to form friendships without being romantically involved. At first, you may find Swedes a bit difficult to get to know. They may seem distant and reserved. But they can also make loyal friends once you get to know them. As a student living in a student dormitory with access to various student activities, you will have ample opportunity to make friends.

Swedes generally like hobbies and activities and pursuing them together with others is probably the easiest way to meet and get to know new people. If invited to someone's home **it is customary to take off your shoes**, especially in the winter. This custom is upheld more strictly in smaller towns and rural areas. Nevertheless, to be on the safe side, it may be a good idea to ask. It is also customary to **be on time** when invited to a dinner party. Eight o'clock means eight o'clock.

Most people moving to a new country usually find many things confusing or strange at first. This will probably be true of your first time in Sweden. Remember, however, that if there is anything you are unsure of the best thing to do is to ask someone. Swedes are informal and willing to help. This is especially true of young people and students, many of whom have traveled widely themselves.

A Note on Equality

Sweden enjoys the status of being the world's most equal society. Almost half of the seats in the Swedish parliament or *Riksdag*, are held by women. Full equality between men and women are not only protected by law but they are deeply ingrained into the Nordic society.

Sweden is a diverse society with a history of international solidarity. A generous refugee policy has turned Sweden into a medley of different cultures, a process that has enriched its own culture along the way. All world religions are represented in Sweden; in most cities you can buy food from virtually anywhere in the world. Newspapers and other media from many different countries are also widely available. Successive governments have worked hard to cement tolerance as a key value in Swedish society. The government has created the Office of the Ombudsman against Ethnic Discrimination whose task it is to actively oppose unfair or offensive treatment on the grounds of skin color, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, or religious faith. Moreover, as Swedish society has grown more diverse and tolerant over the years, other minority groups have become more assertive. Homosexuals live openly and self-avowed gay people occupy responsible positions in public life. While pockets of ignorance and discrimination may remain, they are quite rare. Sweden is a tolerant, modern society that for many years has made it a key priority to secure minority rights through legislation and in practice. Gay students are highly unlikely to encounter offensive behavior or other problems during their stay.

All universities and university colleges are able to provide some form of assistance to students with disabilities. Many of them have also drawn up special programs aimed at helping disabled students to pursue their studies regardless of their handicap. There is a person responsible for matters relating to functional disabilities on the staff of every university and university college. It may be a good idea to contact this person before leaving for Sweden. You will find a list with contact details here. For more general information please see the National Agency for Special Educational Support. For European exchange students, additional information can be found here.

On 1 March 2002, the Swedish parliament passed a law aimed at combating discrimination in institutions of higher education. The law affords protection to all of the above groups. If you have reason to believe that you have been unfairly treated, you should contact your local student union, which will advise you on how to proceed.

Social Life

Your options for leisure activities will depend on where you choose to study. Bigger cities and towns will inevitably have more to offer than smaller ones. On the other hand, the latter may have resources not available to bigger cities, including opportunities for outdoor activities.

Where you choose to study will obviously depend on your personal preference. However Swedes tend to be active and sporting activities are popular among students. Sporting clubs and societies organize a wide range of activities on campus at most universities and university colleges. Taking part in these activities is probably the best way to meet new people and get some rest from studying.

Other natural meeting points are clubs and pubs on and around campus. Many of these serve drinks and food at affordable prices. The legal age for drinking in Sweden is 18. Some establishments - mainly in the bigger cities - may only admit people over 20 or 23. Most people go out for a drink on the weekend, and there are long queues from early on outside the more popular places. Some nightclubs charge an entrance fee, usually ranging from SEK 50 to 100. It's a good idea to get there early in the evening. To find out where to go just ask a fellow Swedish student or pick up a copy of your local newspaper. As a student, however, you have an invaluable social resource in your local student union.

Accommodation

For many people, studying abroad will be their first experience of living away from home for a longer period. This can be a daunting prospect for anyone, especially in view of the demands associated with being a full-time student while trying to gain a foothold in a new culture. It is therefore important that your living environment is comfortable and affordable; you should give yourself plenty of time to make all the necessary arrangements before leaving for Sweden.

There is no national system which handles requests for student accommodation. All applications must be made directly to the student union at your chosen university/university college. However, availability of accommodation varies considerably from place to place. In general, accommodation is available at schools located in smaller and middle-sized cities or towns. Unfortunately, the situation is more difficult in the larger cities, especially in Stockholm and Göteborg, and in the traditional student cities of Lund and Uppsala. Often, the number of students exceeds the number of rooms that universities and university colleges have on offer

and waiting times are long. However, there are alternatives. You can rent a flat on the private market. Though usually more expensive, this is a perfectly viable option for some individuals.

It is not uncommon for students to share a bigger flat with several rooms. You may also be able to rent a single room privately. Visiting students arranging their own accommodation should contact a student union directly, preferably through their respective universities/university colleges. The union will supply you with information on how to look for accommodation in the private market. Other sources of information are local newspapers and message boards at your university. To sign a lease for a room or a flat, you must be able to prove that you are already studying or that you have been admitted to the university or university college. When you want to move out you must give at least one month's written notice. Other rules may also apply.

Accommodation provided by and through the unions is the option preferred by most students. There are several reasons for this. Student flats or rooms tend to be less expensive than private alternatives; they give you a chance to meet fellow students and participate in social activities, and they are often close to lecture halls, libraries and other facilities. Depending on availability, you can choose to live by yourself or in a shared student flat where you will have your own room but share a bathroom/toilet. Flats can be either furnished or unfurnished. Most students, however, prefer to live in a student dormitory. This can be an enjoyable experience as it gives students from all over the world an opportunity to get to know each other and make friends. But it can also be demanding. Students living in the same corridor may have very different cultural backgrounds, different habits and ideas about how to do things. Most dormitories have 10-15 single rooms in each corridor.

A kitchen is shared by 4-15 students. Female and male students live in the same corridor. Often there is also a communal television room. A single room must not be occupied by more than one person - a rule which is strictly enforced. Students are responsible for cleaning their own rooms and the communal kitchen. Although rooms are let with basic furniture, there are no blankets, pillows, sheets, towels or light bulbs. Some utensils may be available in the communal kitchen but you will usually have to bring your own plates, cutlery, pots and pans, etc. Some student unions rent these. Most student housing areas have Laundromats. There is a booking list and unlimited use of the washing machine is covered in the rent. All rent for accommodation must be paid in advance. Sometimes it is possible to divide the rent into three payments over the course of the semester. Speak with your housing coordinator for more information on payment options.

The cost of a student room varies according to the location, but is usually around SEK 2,000-3000 a month. For availability and price, contact the student union at your university or university college.

Below are some examples of the average monthly rate for student accommodation across the country ¹(Prices in SEK at 2005 levels. 1 U.S dollar = approx. SEK 7.2, 1 Euro = approx. SEK 9):

- Lund: 1,770-2,105 SEK
- Stockholm; 2,363-2,653 SEK
- Uppsala: 2,108-3,883 SEK
- Göteborg: 2,740-3,200 SEK
- Luleå 900-2,873 SEK
- Umeå 900-2,946 SEK
- Kalmar: 2,700-3,000 SEK
- Gävle: 2,083-2,500 SEK

The situation with regard to accommodation for students is problematic in many parts of the country, sometimes very much so. There are simply not enough rooms and flats to go round. Fortunately, there are still towns and cities where conditions are better and where all or most students do get accommodation in time.

If you are not guaranteed accommodation as part of your exchange program or through some other agreement it is vital that you approach your local student union as soon as possible. Remember that the situation will vary according to where you choose to study. Some universities or university colleges have more rooms than others. At some schools, the student union will guarantee you accommodation if you apply in time; others have special queues for newly arrived students. A good tip is to check for special offers for foreign students with the international desk at your educational institute.

Banks and Post Offices

Banks are generally open from Monday to Friday, between 9.30 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. Many branches have extended opening hours at least once a week (until 6.00 p.m. in larger cities.). Banks are closed on weekends. You will normally need a national registration number, *personnummer* (See Civil Registration below) to open a bank account. It's a good idea to check whether your bank at home has a Swedish banking partner. Some banks may be willing to let you open an account even if you don't have a Swedish identity card (see below). You will need to show a valid passport, a receipt for your Student Union membership fee and a letter stating that you are a visiting student. Credit cards are widely accepted in Sweden. Commonly accepted cards are Visa, MasterCard, Eurocard and American Express. Traveler's checks can also be used.

The Swedish Post Office has recently been restructured. Mail and packets can now be picked up at a number of places, including gas stations, supermarkets and kiosks. Look for the blue and yellow sign above or by the entrance of outlets providing this service. You can also buy stamps

¹ Please note that due to the shortage of student housing in the older university towns/cities (Uppsala, Lund, Stockholm and Göteborg) prices in the private market are likely to be higher.

and conduct most other errands at these outlets, many of which stay open late in the evening and on weekends. There are also traditional post offices offering the full range of services. They are usually open between 9.30 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. and may have extended opening hours once or twice a week. Yellow post boxes are for national and international letters and blue for regional letters.

Civil Registration

If you intend to stay for longer than a year in Sweden, you can register with the civil registration authorities at your local tax office, *lokala skattemyndigheten*. You will then be given a ten-digit national registration number, or personal number (*personnummer*), based on your date of birth plus four extra digits. For example, if you were born on May 25, 1982, it might look like this: 820525-1045. To apply, take along your passport, a letter of acceptance from your educational institution, documents from the Swedish immigration authorities and, if you are married, your marriage certificate. On registration, you will be entitled to medical benefits through the Swedish National Health Insurance System. When seeing a doctor, for instance, you will be asked for your personal number (see Medical insurance and medical treatment below).

Currency

The Swedish Krona (plural kronor), is denoted by the international currency symbol SEK. One Krona contains 100 öre. Bank notes are available in denominations of 20, 50, 100, 500 and 1,000 kronor, coins in 50 öre, 1, 5 and 10 kronor. All major bank and credit cards are widely accepted throughout Sweden. (1 US\$ = approx. SEK 6.8) (1 Euro = approx. SEK 9). As of this writing January 7, 2005, Sweden has not adopted the common European currency the Euro.

Drugs and Medication

Prescriptions and over-the-counter medicine are only available at local state-run pharmacies called *Apotek* in Swedish. These are open during normal shopping hours. A 24-hour service is available in the major cities. If you take medication, it is a good idea to make sure that you have an adequate supply before leaving for Sweden.

Emergencies and SOS Calls

In case of emergency, dial 112 to contact police, fire brigade or ambulance. Emergency calls made from payphones are free of charge.

ID Cards

An identity card, or an ID card (*legitimation*), is a card on which the bearer's photo and personal number are registered. Having an ID card will help in any contact you may have with Swedish authorities. It will also make it easier for you to open a bank account. To obtain a Swedish ID card you must be registered as a resident (see civil registration, above). Identity cards are issued by post offices and banks. To apply for an ID card, take the civil registration certificate with your personal number, a passport size, black and white or color photograph. Your application must be supported by a person already carrying a valid Swedish ID card who can vouch for your identity. The cost is between SEK 240 and 300. The SFS card is a national student card which gives discounts on domestic travel by air, train and bus. More detailed information on discount offers will be sent along with your SFS -card, which you will receive about one month after you join a student union. For exchange students it is advisable to obtain an ISIC or International Student Identity Card before leaving for Sweden. A holder of an ISIC card is entitled to certain discounts when presented at shops and travel agencies.

Local Transportation

Public transport -buses, commuter trains and (in Stockholm) the underground metro, is available everywhere in Sweden and provides a convenient, fast way to get around. Transportation is fairly inexpensive with a 30-day pass. Passes are valid for unlimited travel on the local network such as the underground (T-bana), local buses and commuter trains. A monthly pass for public transport costs SEK 620 in Stockholm and often less in smaller cities. It is absolutely not necessary to own a car in Sweden, as public transportation is very reliable and inexpensive. If however you choose to hire a car, an American drivers license is valid in Sweden for a period of up to one year. After one year you must relinquish your card to the Swedish authorities for a Swedish drivers license. Sweden has very strict laws regarding operating a vehicle. You must have your head-

Medical Insurance

For non EU/EEA citizens: If you are a citizen in a country that is not a member of the EU/EEA (European Union or European Economic Area), there are certain criteria you must fulfill to become eligible for medical care. As a visiting student, if you stay for longer than one year, i.e. if you have a residence permit valid for one year or more, you are entitled to benefits such as medical treatment. You must, however, be registered as a resident. Application for civil registration (see above) is made at your local tax office. The tax office will then contact the local social insurance office which, in turn, will register you. The application procedure may take time, but you will be fully covered if you can show that you have already applied for registration as a resident. Social insurance does not cover your journey to Sweden or the time you spend in the country prior to registration. Thus, to be fully covered you will need some form of travel

insurance. Stays of less than one year: If you have a residence permit valid for a period of less than a year you will not be able to register as a resident. Sweden has reciprocal agreements for public medical benefits with some countries; to find out whether your country has such an agreement, you should contact your local social insurance office. Swedish medical care is very efficient and is among the highest in terms of delivery in the world. Students from countries with this type of agreement need only present their passport and a certificate from the social insurance office in their home country. For the reciprocal agreement to apply, the need for medical care must arise during (not prior to) your stay in Sweden.

Students who are not covered by any of these agreements must arrange their own insurance coverage. Medical treatment is very expensive without any form of insurance. This is best done in your home country. Otherwise, check with your student union. It may have a special agreement with an insurance company.

Opening Hours

Shopping hours are generally between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. on weekdays. Shops close between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. on Saturdays. In larger towns, department stores remain open until 8-10 p.m. and some are also open on Sundays between 12 noon and 4 p.m. Shops generally close early on the day before a public holiday.

Financing Your Studies

It is no longer very expensive to live in Sweden, when compared with the rest of Europe, but it still costs money to live and study there. Although in almost all cases, there are no tuition fees, there are still some costs associated with your education that you as a student will be expected to carry. Books, supplies etc., you will also need funds for day-to-day living expenses. But there are ways in which you can mitigate the financial strain. Sweden allows students to work for the duration of their studies. Also, you should try to obtain a scholarship from your home country or those offered by the Swedish government, see <http://www.studyinsweden.se> for more details.

Fees and Costs

Tuition Fees

With rare exceptions, tuition fees in higher education in Sweden are fully subsidized by the government. This applies to foreign as well as Swedish students. Higher education is financed by the state, a system common to many European countries. Please note that scholarships are not awarded by institutions of higher education. The Swedish Institute administers a limited number of scholarships. More information on scholarships section.

Student Union Fees

Students are required to pay a small membership fee to the local student union. Fees range from SEK 150-400 per term depending on the union.

Literature and Textbooks

The required reading is often extensive and students usually have to buy their own books as library copies are limited. Teachers also prepare and hand out their own compendia.

On average, students can expect to spend SEK 750 per month on books in an academic term. With some subjects such as law this figure is likely to be higher. Many student unions organize book sales where students can buy used textbooks cheaply.

Food, Transport and Leisure

Though most students live on a tight budget, there are ways of making your money go further. You can use your student card for discounts and on-campus restaurants are good value. You can also cook your own food; most student accommodations will have some form of kitchen facility open to residents.

In most restaurants and bars, a beer will cost you SEK 40-50 (EUR 4-5), a glass of wine perhaps a little more. Dinner starts at around SEK 100-150 (EUR 10-15) drinks not included. An average monthly budget is set out below to give you some idea of the cost of living in Sweden.

- Food: SEK 2,400
- Student accommodation: SEK 2,100
- Local travel: SEK 500
- Telephone: SEK 300
- Insurance, medical care and hygiene: SEK 250
- Clothing, hobby/leisure: SEK 450
- Student union fee: SEK 60-70
- Total: SEK 6,070, or about EUR 600

Remember however, that prices can vary considerably depending on where you live. Stockholm, for example, is more expensive than smaller towns.

The approximate prices of some items are listed below (1 Euro = approx. SEK 10):

- Milk: SEK 8/liter
- Bread: SEK 10-20/loaf
- Cornflakes (box): SEK 30
- Margarine/Butter: SEK 20 /500g tub
- Cheese: SEK 50/kg
- Lamb: SEK 60-90/kg
- Beef: SEK 70-140/kg
- Pork: SEK 50-100/kg
- Chicken: SEK 30-50/kg
- Eggs: SEK 2 each
- Rice: SEK 30-35/kg
- Pasta: SEK 12/kg
- Soda: SEK 5/33 cl
- Cigarettes: SEK 35.50/packet
- Beer: SEK 6-10/33 cl (at food shop)
- Wine: SEK 55- /75 cl bottle (at Systembolaget - the Swedish alcohol retailing monopoly)
- Newspaper: SEK 12
- Cinema: SEK 85
- Theatre: SEK 50-200

Who Can Work In Sweden?

If you are enrolled at a Swedish university or university college you can work in Sweden without a work permit. You do, however, need a residence permit. Nordic, EU and EEA students need to get a residence permit if they are staying in Sweden for longer than three months. All other nationalities need to get a residence permit before they arrive in Sweden. For information on obtaining a residence permit, contact your nearest embassy or consulate or the Swedish Immigration Board directly. For further information on working in Sweden, visit the Swedish National Labor Market Administration's website.

Scholarships

There are a restricted number of scholarships available to foreign students planning to study in Sweden. Competition is keen and students need to make sure they satisfy all the necessary criteria before applying. Incomplete applications, or applications from students not meeting the specified requirements, will not be considered. The Swedish Institute awards three kinds of

scholarships: worldwide (with some exceptions), regional and country-specific. If your country is listed under one of the regional scholarship programs you should apply for these, not for the scholarship listed under worldwide. Please also note that students applying for scholarships for Master's level studies should apply directly to the university or university college concerned.

The Guest Scholarship Program

This scholarship is extended in global competition. It is open to students from any part of the world except for those from the Nordic countries - Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The scholarship is aimed at those wishing to come to Sweden as guest students for a specific period of time. It is not aimed at individuals intending to settle permanently in Sweden.

The Guest Scholarship is designed for students seeking admittance to programs at Master's level and for those pursuing advanced university studies at PhD or post-doctoral levels. **No scholarships are awarded for undergraduate studies.**

Please note that all applications for funding of Master's level studies must be sent directly to the institutions of higher education concerned, not to the Swedish Institute.

Application deadlines for guest scholarships for the academic year 2004/2005 are as follows:

- For advanced university level part of Ph.D. or post-doctoral studies the deadline is 15 January 2004. Applications received after this date will not be considered.
- For Master's level studies the deadline is the same as the application deadline for the specific program. Applications are to be sent directly to the university or university college concerned.

No scholarships are awarded for undergraduate studies. Also, a scholarship cannot be granted for a complete course of study leading to a Ph.D. degree; it is designed to fund parts of such a degree or parts of post-doctoral studies. Students who are eligible for any of the regional scholarship programs should also submit their application to these programs using the relevant application form.

The maximum scholarship period is three academic years but scholarships are usually granted for one academic year (nine months) at a time. They can also be awarded for study periods of shorter duration. The scholarships are intended to finance a temporary stay in Sweden. Good knowledge of English and/or Swedish is required. Students already studying in Sweden are eligible to apply if they are not permanent residents and if they do not hold a valid work permit². In addition, they may not have been living in Sweden for more than two years when the scholarship is due to begin. At present the scholarship amounts to SEK 7,500 per month for graduate and research students and SEK 9,000 for holders of a Ph.D. degree. Each scholarship is designed to cover the living expenses of ONE person only. There are no grants of any kind for family members. Scholarship holders from developing countries can apply for a partial travel

² Not applicable to EU citizens

grant. The scholarship holder is insured by the Swedish Institute against illness and accidents during the scholarship period.

Scholarships for advanced university level part of Ph.D. or post-doctoral studies:

Prior to submitting an application for a scholarship, the applicant must contact a Swedish university or university college department willing to accept the applicant for the proposed studies. This contact can also be made through a professor or academic adviser at the applicant's home institution.

To enable the Swedish host institution to consider issuing a letter of invitation, applicants must clearly indicate their intended area of study or research and include a C.V. or résumé detailing out their previous studies or research. This is a minimum requirement.

The outcome of the selection process will be announced to candidates in May/June of the following year. Individual questions concerning the application procedure will not be answered.

Scholarships for Master's level programs:

Applications for a Master's level program should be sent directly to the university or university college concerned. Students applying to a Master's level program should clearly indicate in their application if they wish to be considered for a scholarship.

The university or university college will recommend a limited number of candidates for a Swedish Institute scholarship. The Swedish Institute will then make the final selection of scholarship candidates. Students who are not already pursuing a Master's level degree in Sweden are given priority in the scholarship selection process. All questions concerning the application procedure for the Master's level program should be directed to the university or university college concerned.

Please note that applicants to Master's level programs should not apply for a scholarship directly to the Swedish Institute. Applications sent to the Swedish Institute will not be considered. All questions concerning the application procedure for the Master's level program should be directed to the university/university college concerned. The outcome of the selection process will be announced to candidates in May/June 2004. Individual questions concerning the application procedure will not be answered.

What is it like to study in Sweden?

As a foreign student you may find relations between teachers and students at Swedish universities and university colleges surprisingly informal. It is not unusual to see students and teachers fraternizing outside regular lecture hours. This makes for a comfortable and stimulating study environment, in which students are encouraged to develop and apply their own critical faculties. Students enjoy a large measure of independence and are expected to do a substantial amount of work on their own initiative. This approach can be demanding and you must be prepared to take a good deal of responsibility for your own studies.

The academic year is divided into two terms. The autumn term begins at the end of August and lasts until mid-January with a short break at the end of December. The spring term runs from mid-January to the beginning of June. Full-time studies correspond approximately to a 40-hour workweek. Students normally study only one course at a time. Exceptions include technology subjects, where several courses may be studied simultaneously.

The course structure varies with the subject area. Technical programs normally feature a high proportion of scheduled hours. Courses in the social sciences and arts involve 12-15 hours' attendance per week but you will be expected to read on your own time in preparation for the lectures.

Course activities include lectures attended by several hundred students and smaller seminars 8-10 students, where students are expected to play an active part in discussions and express their own views. Classes - composed of groups of 15-20 students (occasionally fewer) - are designed to encourage interaction and discussion with the teacher. The aim is to help you develop your cognitive skills and to encourage critical thinking. The required reading is usually extensive, and you will be responsible for buying your own books, although teachers often prepare and hand out compendia. Library copies are limited. Courses in technology and the natural sciences involve a substantial amount of laboratory work. Practical exercises are a feature of many study programs. Most programs conclude with a degree thesis or project work.

Examinations are in the form of written and oral tests. Laboratory work, group work and special projects may be the subject of both oral and written reports. Students are expected to be able to use computers and common word-processing programs, e-mail and the internet. Universities and university colleges offer access to computer rooms and internet services.

All institutions of higher education are subject to rigorous rules and targets aimed at maintaining educational standards. Students are also expected to observe high standards of academic conduct. Academic misconduct, such as cheating and plagiarism, is considered a serious offence and a variety of sanctions can be applied if a student is found guilty. These range from warnings to suspension for a specified period. **Cheating is also not socially acceptable in Sweden and neither your professors nor fellow students will tolerate such an act.** Plagiarism

and cheating involves presenting as your own work something you did not do yourself. Examples include the use of another author's words or ideas without proper citation, turning in work which someone else did for you, copying from someone else's paper during an exam, or using notes during an exam (unless approved by the teacher). There are many other examples; when in doubt do not hesitate to consult your professor.

What Degrees Can I Study Towards?

The Swedish higher education system offers courses leading to a number of degrees. Sweden has a national degree system, though its particulars may differ from what students in other countries are familiar with. Recently, the structure of the system has been brought more closely into line with that of other European countries. To be accepted for study towards any of the following degrees you will need to satisfy general and specific entrance requirements:

- *Högskoleexamen* (University Diploma) may be conferred on completion of appropriate studies of at least 80 credit points. (Two years of full-time study.)
- *Kandidatexamen* (Bachelor's degree) may be conferred on completion of studies of at least 120 credit points. Sixty of these credit points must consist of in-depth studies in the student's main subject; ten credit points must consist of an independent thesis. (Three years of full-time study.)
- *Magisterexamen* (Master's degree) There are two types of Master's degrees in Sweden:
 1. A *magisterexamen med ämnesbredd* is an option for those students who wish to add to previous academic work by pursuing studies within a different academic field.
 2. A *magisterexamen med ämnesdjup* allows students to build on previous academic work within their chosen area of study. To be eligible for this type of degree students must have completed studies in a relevant discipline.
 3. *Yrkesexamina* (Professional degrees). There are 50 professional degrees in Swedish higher education. Some entitle the holder to practice professions requiring registration or special authorization. Professional degrees may be awarded in such fields as law, social work, art, medicine, odontology, engineering, education, agriculture and forestry, and veterinary medicine.
 4. *Licentiatexamen* (Licentiate degree) is awarded after postgraduate studies of 80 credit points and an academic essay or thesis of 40 credit points.
 5. *Doktorsexamen* (Doctorate or PhD) is awarded after postgraduate studies of 160 credit points (4-5 years) and a dissertation of 80 credit points.

Study Requirements

Before you decide to apply for a course or full degree program in Sweden you should make sure that you satisfy the general entrance requirements. There may also be a number of specific

requirements, depending on whether you want to do research, enroll in a Master's program or apply for courses at undergraduate level. (You can read about these under the relevant headings.)

Students must also show that they have attained a level of written and oral proficiency in English equivalent to that required on completion of Swedish-upper secondary education. You will need to support your application with an international proficiency test certificate.*

If you plan to study in Swedish, you will need to show that you have attained the required level of proficiency. You can do this by taking the national Swedish test, TISUS (Test in Swedish for University Studies). Please bear in mind that these are the general entrance requirements. Most courses and programs have specific requirements that vary according to the subject area and type of course selected. For example, if you apply for courses at intermediate or advanced levels, you must meet the requirements with respect to previous university studies in your chosen subject.

Entrance requirements are normally based on Swedish upper-secondary school standards. Each university or university college assesses foreign applicants' diplomas and qualifications in accordance with these standards when deciding whether an applicant is eligible. Most foreign students will also need to obtain a visa and residence permit before leaving for Sweden. Examples of tests used and minimum scores:

1. Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Scores: 500-550 (paper-based test), 213 (computer-based test)
2. International English Language Testing Service (IELTS). Score: 6.0 (no band lower than 5.0)
3. Cambridge EFL examination/tests (Grades A or B)
4. Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB). Score: 90 points

Students whose mother tongue is Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, Icelandic or Faeroese are deemed to have adequate knowledge of Swedish. The same applies to Finnish students who have studied Swedish at upper-secondary level for three years or more.

Undergraduate Studies

Most foreign students come to Sweden as exchange students; their home university has an exchange agreement with a Swedish institution - either as part of an EU exchange program or as a bilateral scheme. As the regulations governing residence permits are strict and study places are in short supply, opportunities for students from other parts of the world to come to Sweden as free movers, i.e. students who apply on an individual basis, are limited. Careful planning, the right educational background, personal funds and strong motivation are needed. If you are a free mover, make sure to plan ahead and set aside plenty of time to make all the necessary arrangements.

Admission Requirements

Students must satisfy general as well as specific entrance requirements to be eligible for courses at undergraduate level. The general requirements are:

- Completion of an upper-secondary school program conferring eligibility for university studies in the same country and corresponding in level to the equivalent program in Sweden.
- Proficiency in English (both written and oral) equivalent to that required on completion of Swedish upper-secondary education. Universities and university colleges will normally require verification in the form of an international proficiency test certificate. Examples of tests used and minimum scores:
 - Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Scores: 500-550 (paper-based test), 213 (computer-based test)
 - International English Language Testing Service (IELTS). Score: 6.0 (no band lower than 5.0)
 - Cambridge EFL examination/tests (Grades A or B)
 - Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB). Score: 90 points

Written and oral skills in Swedish corresponding to the level of Swedish required on completion of Swedish upper-secondary education. This is generally assessed by the national Swedish test, TISUS³. Entrance requirements for a particular course or program are established independently at each university or university college. These requirements will vary and you will need to contact the institution directly for exact information. Admission to all undergraduate education is limited.

All study programs and courses have a fixed number of places, which are usually exceeded by the number of applicants. Every university and university college has its own procedure for selecting among eligible applicants. The criteria applied include: grades obtained, results from previous courses, assessment of work samples, interview results, special admission tests and work experience. These criteria vary from institution to institution. To participate in the SOCRATES/ERASMUS program you must satisfy the following requirements:

- You are a student and enrolled in a formal program of study at university level leading to a degree or diploma (including doctoral level) in one of the participating countries.
- You are a citizen of one the participating countries (or are recognized as having the official status of refugee, stateless person or permanent resident).
- You have completed at least the first year of your university studies.

³ Students applying for courses or programs taught in English are normally exempt from this requirement.

How to Apply?

While the application process may vary slightly depending on which university or university college you apply to, the general procedure is as follows:

If you want to apply for admittance to an individual course, you apply directly to the university or university college. Application deadlines may vary but are usually set in mid-April for the autumn term and in mid-October for courses starting in the spring term. Information and application forms are available from the institutions themselves.

If you want to apply to an undergraduate degree program, in most cases you need to apply via the National Admissions Office for Higher Education, which processes your application. You do not apply to individual institutions. Application brochures and forms (in Swedish only) are available for the spring term from August (deadline: 15 October) and for the autumn term from February (deadline: 15 April).

Please note that **only students with attested proficiency in Swedish should apply**. The first notices of admission are sent out in July and December. Students from outside the European Union may have difficulty obtaining residence permits in time for the start of the term.

Master's Programs Taught in English

A large number of Master's programs - around 150 - are taught entirely in English. Engineering and technology account for about 40, but many other subjects and disciplines are also represented. These are open to all students with the necessary qualifications and offer an opportunity for those who wish to focus more specifically on their chosen area of interest. You can search for programs online, or download a booklet with the information from <http://www.studyinsweden.se>. With a few exceptions, all courses and programs are financed by the government and are thus free of charge for Swedish and foreign students.

Magisterexamen – The Swedish Master's Degree

Some 150 Master's programs leading to a *magisterexamen* - the Swedish equivalent of a Master's degree - are taught in English. To be admitted to a Master's program, students must have completed a course of study leading to a degree or diploma equivalent to 120 credit points in the Swedish higher education system. The final decision on whether to accept an applicant will rest with the institution concerned. Moreover, some programs may have specific entry requirements which students will also need to satisfy. Master's programs normally require one year of full-time study, or 40 credit points. A number of programs, mainly in the field of engineering, confer 60 credit points and require one and a half years of full-time study. You can study towards a *magisterexamen* in one of two ways, depending on your interests and academic background:

A *magisterexamen med ämnesbredd* is an option for students who wish to add to their previous academic work by pursuing studies in a different academic field.

A *magisterexamen med ämnesdjup* allows students to build on previous academic work within their chosen field of study. To be eligible for this type of degree, applicants must have completed studies in a relevant discipline. Students are normally required to write an independent thesis of at least 20 credit points or two of at least 10 credit points each.

Civilingenjör - Swedish Master of Science

A *civilingenjör* degree is awarded on completion of studies of 180 credit points in the relevant discipline. However, foreign students with previous studies or a degree in science or engineering equivalent to 120 credit points in the Swedish system can study towards a *civilingenjör* (M. Sc.) by completing studies of 60 credit points in the Swedish system. Although programs vary in structure according to the institution, they usually comprise a total workload of 60 credit points, 20 of which may consist of thesis work.

Admission Requirements

As a general requirement, students must have completed a course of study leading to a degree or diploma equivalent to 120 credit points in the Swedish higher education system.

In many cases a bachelor's degree will be regarded as fulfilling this requirement. Students must also provide evidence of proficiency in English. Universities and university colleges will normally require verification in the form of an international proficiency test certificate, such as TOEFL or MELAB.

Eligible applicants then undergo a selection procedure determined by the individual university or university college and based on various criteria, such as grades obtained and results of previous courses and degree projects. An interview of the applicant may also be a part of the selection procedure. All of these will influence the outcome of your application.

Applying?

Applications must be made directly to each university or university college. For programs starting in the autumn term, deadlines range from December to April. Information and application forms are available from the department responsible for the program. In most cases you can also access this information through the institution's website. Make sure that you satisfy all the necessary requirements before submitting an application. If you are not sure, please contact the university or university college directly.

Doctoral Programs

Swedish research is wide-ranging and well respected internationally. Swedish researchers are especially prominent in the fields of natural science, medicine and bio-technology. Unlike the case in many other countries, most publicly funded research is carried out at universities and institutions of higher education. Many teachers are involved in both education and research, while also supervising PhD students. Foreign students enrolled as PhD students at their home universities can register for postgraduate courses and seminars in Sweden for a limited period, provided there is an exchange agreement or some other link between the Swedish institution and its foreign counterpart.

Otherwise, admission to doctoral studies is restricted and universities and university colleges may only admit students who have funding for the entire study period. Many departments have no formal admission requirements with regard to Swedish language skills. However, it may be advisable for students to take some classes in Swedish.

Some 18,000 people are enrolled as research students in Sweden. Around 3,000 were granted doctoral or licentiate degrees in 2000. The average age of enrolment is 29 and the average researcher is awarded his or her PhD at the age of 35. Research in Sweden has an international approach and exchange is seen as an integral part of the system. About 20% of all research students have a non-Swedish background. Research students from other countries are primarily represented in the fields of medicine, natural sciences and technology.

For more information please see the Handbook for Postgraduate Students

The Swedish PhD

PhD students are required to undertake a research assignment and pursue theoretical studies in the form of seminars or courses. The research is intended to lead to a scholarly thesis; writing it will take up most of a student's time.

Postgraduate science students spend a great deal of time in the laboratory. If research findings are reproduced in scientific journals the thesis may be a compilation of the published articles. All doctoral students receive individual tutoring and theses are publicly defended. Some departments may require that the thesis be part of an ongoing project within the department. In the fields of technology, natural science and medicine, researchers often work as part of a team.

The term "postgraduate school" is used in connection with doctoral studies and research training with a clearly defined organizational structure and offering a carefully designed range of courses, often of a multidisciplinary character. Studies towards a doctoral degree are worth 160 credit points and require a minimum of four years of full-time study. Licentiate degrees - comprised of 80 credit points - require two years of study. This program includes courses and a final major degree dissertation. The thesis often accounts for more than half of the total

workload. Studying towards a PhD is a demanding commitment. Much of the work is carried out independently and students need to be highly motivated.

Admission Requirements

To be admitted to a postgraduate research position, a student must hold a university degree equivalent to a Bachelor's degree or higher, with a major in the same subject as the intended field of study. The major must have included a degree thesis presenting the results of independent research. In some cases a Master's degree may be required. Foreign students wishing to study for a PhD in Sweden are advised to prepare for a *magisterexamen* (or the Swedish equivalent of a Master's degree) in Sweden first, if a relevant program is available in English. A *magisterexamen* is likely to improve a student's chances of being admitted to a PhD program.

Specific requirements are set for each subject. For information about these you should contact the department you are interested in. An assessment will also be made of the applicant's suitability and his or her ability to complete doctoral studies. Students must also have a good command of English.

Many departments have no formal Swedish language requirements for admission to doctoral studies or research training. However, a good command of the language is essential in many subjects as lectures and seminars are often conducted in Swedish.

In most cases, students will be advised to attend Swedish language courses parallel to their doctoral studies. **Admission to doctoral studies and research training is restricted and competition is keen.** Universities and university colleges can only admit students who are funded for the entire study period, or who have been awarded a postgraduate studentship (*doktorandtjänst*) or a study grant (*utbildningsbidrag*) by the university.

How to Apply?

When a wholly or partly funded position for a PhD student becomes vacant it must be advertised so that all those interested can apply. Many institutions of higher education also advertise externally-funded positions. Announcements on the websites of institutions are common. Students considering doctoral studies or research training must obtain specific information and application material directly from the institution and the department where the subject is taught.

Applications for PhD studies must be sent directly to the department along with officially certified copies of diplomas and/or certificates or official transcripts, diploma work and letters of recommendation. Authorized translations are often required. Some departments have fixed application dates while others admit students on an ongoing basis.

Studying in English

Undergraduate programs and courses

Although a growing number of undergraduate courses have been made available in English in order to make them more accessible, embarking on a full undergraduate program is not an option for most foreign students. This is because for the most part these programs require a very good command of written and spoken Swedish. There are some exceptions, however: Jönköping International Business School, Malmö University College, Mälardalen University College and Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences offer undergraduate programs taught in English. Most other courses at the undergraduate level offered in English are intended for exchange students. If free movers are admitted, they must meet all the normal requirements with regard to previous university studies and knowledge of English. Universities and university colleges will normally require verification in the form of an international proficiency test certificate.

Master's Programs

Some 150 international Master's programs are now available in English. Around 40 of these are in the technology and engineering fields, but many other subjects and disciplines are also represented. These are open to all students with the requisite qualifications and English language skills. For example, most higher education institutions require a minimum of 550 points for the paper-based test and 213 for the computer-based test in the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Other tests, such as IELTS, MELAB, Cambridge EFL examination and APIEL, may also be accepted.

Doctoral Studies/Research Training

Although research departments often have no formal Swedish language requirement, a good command of Swedish is often necessary as many lectures and seminars are conducted in Swedish. Students may be advised to attend Swedish language courses parallel to their doctoral studies.

In addition to the necessary academic qualifications, applicants must be proficient in English. For specific information regarding requirements and the availability of Swedish language courses, please contact the institution you are interested in.

Studying in Swedish

With few exceptions, those studying towards a full undergraduate degree must have attained a level of proficiency in written and spoken Swedish corresponding to that required on completion of Swedish upper secondary education.

The Test in Swedish for University Studies (TISUS) is designed to assess eligibility for university studies in accordance with general and specific entrance requirements. TISUS, which is held several times a year, includes tests in reading comprehension, oral presentation and written composition. The examination fee is SEK 1,200. Please contact the test providers for applications and information about test dates.

With a TISUS certificate you can apply to courses and programs offered in Swedish by Swedish institutions of higher education. A comprehensive database of available courses can be found on <http://www.studera.nu/>. This information is only available in Swedish. Please note that you need to fulfill other academic requirements, in addition to demonstrating proficiency in Swedish.

Only two universities, Linköping and Umeå, offer preparatory courses in Swedish.

Linköping University offers a "college course" in Swedish designed to provide non-Swedish-speaking students with sufficient knowledge of the language to satisfy the relevant entry requirements for studies at the university. This is a two-term course of full time study and cannot be counted towards a university degree. On completion of the course, students take the TISUS. Students applying to the course and undergraduate studies are normally granted a study place, provided they pass the TISUS and have the right academic qualifications.

Umeå University runs a Foundation Course in Swedish aimed at students wishing to study towards a degree at Umeå University. No prior knowledge of Swedish is required. The course is full-time and lasts three terms. Students may therefore not enroll in other programs while attending the foundation course. Formal requests to attend the course should be sent in along with all other applications for undergraduate programs or courses. Students may start their undergraduate studies if they pass the TISUS after completing the foundation course.

Both institutions only admit between 15 and 20 students to each course. Competition is therefore keen. Special courses in Swedish are offered to exchange-program students who are already enrolled, and to visiting researchers at universities.

Swedish Language Studies

Swedish is studied by many more people than the size of the country would suggest - some 40,000 people worldwide. There are a number of ways in which students with no previous experience of Swedish can improve their knowledge of the language. Please bear in mind, however, that learning Swedish without any prior knowledge of the language to the level

necessary for admittance to university courses in Swedish can be a difficult and very time-consuming process.

For Beginners

In many cities you can find basic language courses in Swedish organized by a number of study associations. These courses, however, are intended for individuals already staying in Sweden for a specified period. It is not possible to obtain a residence permit to attend basic Swedish language courses. Furthermore, there are no scholarships available for basic language studies. For an overview of the opportunities open to beginners please see the booklet "Swedish in Sweden".

Alternatively, you can prepare for courses with the help of self-study material like *På Svenska!*, a beginner's course in Swedish as a foreign language. Copies of the course – complete with textbook and cassettes – can be ordered from the Sweden Bookshop. For a selection of links to other options, in Swedish, please see SI's information on Swedish language studies.

Beginner's courses in Swedish are also offered by private language consultants. These are normally designed for employees of companies doing business in Sweden. Some are open to the public but can be expensive. For further information contact *Sveriges Förenade Språkutbildare*. If already in Sweden, you can also consult your local telephone directory, under the heading *Språkutbildare*.

Work is underway on an Internet-based beginner's course in Swedish. The project, entitled *Lingua 2*, is intended principally for university students. The course, scheduled to come online at the end of 2003, will give students a basic knowledge of Swedish and provide an introduction to Swedish social and cultural life.

Har det så bra i Sverige!!
Enjoy your stay in Sweden!!

Kind Regards,

Michael Wilson, Anthropology Senior 2005

100% of the above information contained in this brochure is from the official websites dedicated to promoting study in Sweden or <http://www.studyinsweden.se>, <http://www.studera.nu>, and <http://www.sweden.se>. Where possible, I have updated the information and included personal experiences and relevant information for the beneficiary. If you have any personal questions regarding Sweden or Scandinavia, please feel free to drop me an email at mikael.wilson@gmail.com.