



Swedish higher education for companies and organisations



# Contract Training



**Si.**  
Swedish Institute



## Swedish universities for contract training

Sweden, a safe and modern country in northern Europe, has accrued a spectacular reputation as an innovator and creative force. It has produced world-beating brands – like Volvo, Ikea, Ericsson, H&M and SAAB – alongside world famous names – Ingmar Bergman, August Strindberg, Astrid Lindgren, Björn Borg, Greta Garbo and Abba. Sweden has a strong industrial tradition, wide-ranging linguistic skills, extensive infrastructure and a great familiarity with information and communications technology (ICT).

Swedish universities constantly strive to be at the forefront of research and education. As a percentage of GDP, the country is among the world's top investors in higher education.

*If your company or organisation is looking to develop your employees' skills, Swedish universities can be your partner in education, by providing training that you commission.*

The Swedish government acknowledges commissioned higher education as an important tool for increased international mobility

leading to cooperation between universities, companies and public authorities.

Swedish multinationals like Ericsson, Astra Zeneca and Volvo regularly send their top employees to Sweden for contract training courses.

Public authorities and state universities can also take advantage of educational opportunities relevant to their area of responsibility. Swedish universities can help train ministries, authorities and students in countries where national institutions might lack the capacity to provide specific skills.

Many Swedish universities have had extensive experience offering courses taught in English to international students, and these are now offered as contract training in the form of course packages, from 5 weeks of study up to full master's programs.

Training can be tailored to your specific needs. The length, content, level and teaching method of these courses are all adaptable. Some institutions also offer on-site teaching in your country, if facilities are available.



## Excellent Swedish higher education

Swedish higher education excels at advanced research and applied sciences - precisely the skills that knowledge-based companies and organisations require.

### Medicine

Swedish medical training is of a very high caliber. One recent global survey ranked Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm, renowned for its medical faculty, as the best university in the Nordic region and the sixth best in Europe. The survey, conducted by Chinese researchers, measured academic and research performance (using such criteria as the number of Nobel laureates and the extent to which researchers are cited in leading periodicals and by other researchers).

In medical research, there has been a series of pioneering Swedish medical discoveries that have improved the quality of life as well as benefiting the business sector. These include the stomach-ulcer medicine Losec, various vaccines against infectious diseases, techniques for new implants and new asthma treatments.

### Technology

In technological fields such as microelectronics, vehicle and aircraft technology and ICT, a Swedish university education is considered world class, with researchers that are working at the vanguard of their respective fields.

*Lena Torell, President, Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences (IVA):*  
“Sweden has world-class research in IT, biotech and nanotech, as well as in certain environmental and energy sectors. Our civil engineering training is highly ranked, and two of our universities have been listed among the top ten in Europe. We have an international and open learning culture that supports many cross-disciplinary combinations.”



### **Natural sciences**

In the natural sciences, Sweden has a long tradition of eminent basic research, driven by curiosity and built on a foundation of solid education. Just as the Swedish scientist Carl von Linné (Linnaeus) classified plants according to his groundbreaking taxonomic system in the 18th century, Swedish biochemists are now part of an international effort to map the genomes of plants and animals.

### **Product development**

When it comes to intelligent products, materials technology, industrial design and production methods, Sweden is way out in front. Every year, US-based General Motors ranks the world's best non-American universities, and Sweden's own Chalmers School of Continuing and Professional Studies finds itself high up on that list. Criteria for success in this survey include the extent of outreach activities with the business world and the quality and amount of research performed.

### **Business**

Whether it's management training, marketing, project finance, financial services or e-commerce, Swedish business-oriented education programs enjoy a very good reputation internationally. When in 2003 the Financial Times published their list of the world's best International Executive MBA programs, the Stockholm School of Economics was on it.

### **Creative industries**

In the entertainment and experience industries - such as architecture, design, film, photography, art, media, literature, fashion, music, set design, tourism and experience-based learning - Sweden's creative exuberance has attracted international acclaim. Cooperation and exchange with other countries is frequent.



## Compelling reasons to train in Sweden

*Karin Ulfsdotter-Crepin, External relations office, Mälardalen University College:*

“Abroad, we are recognised for how well we train adults that have already been in the workforce for some time. We are egalitarian in terms of age, class and gender. It’s built on participation and is non-hierarchical. If you visit a Swedish university you will see more 40-year old men with baby strollers than in any other place in Europe. This environment is unique to Sweden, and is very valuable.”

### **Independent thinking is encouraged**

Sweden has a student-centric educational system, with open, informal relations between students and teachers, where personal initiative and critical thought are prized. Teaching is often done in small groups, which encourages dialogue and collaboration, and teachers are accessible outside lecture hours. This informal atmosphere is designed to promote social as well as intellectual development.

### **Close cooperation between industry and academia**

Sweden’s reputation for innovation is built on close cooperation between industry and academia. Courses combine theory with application, and students complete the

practical components of their degrees at real companies.

### **Standards are high...**

Swedish universities are renowned for their investigative research and independent thinking, and this reputation is cemented with nationally certified degrees and rigorous quality control. Sweden has one of the most ambitious educational evaluation programs in the world, aimed at maintaining the system’s competitive edge. All education standards are assessed and maintained by the National Agency for Higher Education and by the institutions themselves.

### **... and they go way back**

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.

### **Nimble and flexible**

Swedish universities are independent authorities. This makes them nimble and flexible, able to quickly offer new courses that answer to the changing needs of students and labor markets. The result is an internationally relevant array of courses to choose from.



### **Strong links to research**

Sweden is one of the world's most committed investors in basic research; public spending in the field of research tops 3% of GDP. What further distinguishes Sweden is the high proportion of university-based research, which makes possible a strong connection between research and education. Lecturers are encouraged to pursue research and to continuously develop their skills, while professors regularly teach – even at introductory levels.

### **Democratic**

Student input is unusually strong in Sweden. Universities are obliged to conduct student evaluations after every course. This tends to produce results. Often, a lecturer will begin a course by saying, “The following changes have been implemented this year ...” Students, by law, are represented on all university decision-making bodies.

### **High proportion of adult-students – lifelong learning**

The large proportion of adult students makes university environments refreshingly ageless. Everyone, regardless of age, can feel at home at a Swedish university. Many students are professionals or have left behind one career and are preparing for the next one.

### **High proportion of women**

Sixty percent of university students are women. Egalitarian aims are rewarded: the National Agency of Higher Education annually awards a prize to the university that best promotes equality. Among teachers, men still dominate, but the proportion of female instructors and professors is growing.



### **Many students from abroad**

Many students studying in Sweden come from abroad – 12.5% of new students – making Sweden one of the world’s most inclusive countries for education. There are now PhD candidates from some 80 countries working towards their degrees in Sweden. Sweden’s educational policy is based on the recognition that a multicultural student body is a resource. There are services designed to make guest students feel at home.

### **English is spoken by all**

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

*Sven-Erik Österlund, Centek contract training, Luleå University of Technology:*

“What’s special with Swedish education, our foreign students say, is that they can pursue study visits to companies, which freely share their knowledge. This openness is much appreciated.”



## Customer feedback

The list of foreign companies and organisations buying contract training from Swedish universities is growing steadily. Universities offer courses conducted in English, and they are often tailor-made to suit the client's specific needs in terms of length and content.

A Chinese government agency bought courses in public law from Lund University. Iran's national steel company discovered via Swedish corporations such as Atlas Copco and Sandvik that Sweden has experience in the mining industry, and bought training from Luleå University of Technology. Through a European Union aid program, Luleå University of Technology found clients in Tanzania. The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences has sold places in its veterinary medicine program to Norway.

The Stockholm School of Economics offers an International MBA program, currently with participants from 18 countries.

### **Ibaraki hospital, Japan**

*Professor Namuro Suzuki* is a psychiatrist and head of a hospital in Ibaraki, Japan. In a quest for new ideas on administering dementia care, he and five of his colleagues traveled to Stockholm in January 2003 to attend the course *Swedish dementia care today and tomorrow* at the Karolinska Institutet.

“I was impressed by all the creativity there is in the field of dementia care in Sweden. What I saw will have a big influence on how I continue my work at home. Sick people should be interacted with as individuals. You do that in Sweden. You also have a quality control system for dementia care professionals that we lack in Japan.”



### **General Motors, USA**

*Diane Landsiedel, Manager, GM Technical Education Program:*

“The GM Technical Education Program (TEP) selected Chalmers because it is a leading research and teaching university in the forefront of safety and environmental engineering - areas of great importance to General Motors. Chalmers integrates leading edge research into its course content combined with applications to our industry. Its membership in the Alliance for Global Sustainability and long term partnership with SAAB demonstrates the university’s effectiveness and commitment to industry.”

“One important advantage is that the faculty and administration at Chalmers read, write, and speak excellent English - the official language at General Motors worldwide.”

### **New Commercial Room Beteiligungsgesellschaft, Germany**

Hamburg venture capital firm New Commercial Room Beteiligungsgesellschaft trained Jörn Schmidt at the Stockholm University School of Business’ International Executive MBA program.

“We chose Stockholm because the Swedish management culture has a good reputation. You are good at networking, and have made great strides in those fields we invest in, especially life science, medical devices and biotech. Stockholm is a very exciting biotech region.”

“Stockholm is one of the world’s most beautiful cities, and the quality of life is high. I much enjoyed the university, and I felt welcome there; everyone cared about our needs. Compared to Germany, studying in Sweden was a much more personal experience, perhaps because class sizes are smaller. This is obviously an advantage.”



## How do I buy contract training?

### **1. Inquiries and negotiations**

Some 20 Swedish universities offer contract training on the international market to companies, organisations, state universities and public authorities (individuals may not, according to Swedish law, buy education). Handling of client inquiries varies, though institutions offering contract training are obliged to draw up written guidelines.

Some universities have a special administrative unit dedicated to external cooperation. It handles all inquiries and directs them to the relevant department. Other universities use university-owned companies that act as brokers between universities and clients. Typically, client companies are assigned a client manager, who makes sure companies' needs are met.

### **2. Contracts and agreements**

When parties have negotiated the content, form and cost of a training program, a contract is drawn up. This is required by the National Agency for Higher Education, so that the client has a concrete set of expectations about the training to be provided.

### **3. Costs**

State universities offering contract training programs are subject to the Fees Ordinance. Fees should cover the costs incurred by the institution in providing the program. Costs include materials, facilities, equipment, and salaries for teachers.

Swedish institutions are equipped with state-of-the-art laboratories, libraries and information technologies. Using these facilities is a very cost-effective alternative to investing in such training infrastructure yourself.

Universities are happy to provide you with options and fee estimates.



## Further information

[www.studyinsweden.se/contracttraining](http://www.studyinsweden.se/contracttraining)  
e-mail: [contracttraining@si.se](mailto:contracttraining@si.se).

Blekinge Institute of Technology  
Chalmers University of Technology  
Dalarna University College  
Jönköping International Business School  
Halmstad University College  
Karolinska Education AB  
Kristianstad University College  
KTH, Royal Institute of Technology  
Linköping University  
Luleå University of Technology  
Lund University Education AB  
Malmö University College  
Mälardalen University College  
SLU, Swedish University of  
Agricultural Sciences  
Stockholm School of Economics  
Stockholm University  
Umeå University  
Uppsala University  
University College of Borås  
University College of Kalmar

Sweden is an open, multicultural and safe society with a long tradition of welcoming students from abroad. Swedes are proud of having built a society that promotes equality between the sexes, tolerance and inclusiveness.

Sweden has nine million inhabitants. More than three quarters of all Swedes live in urban areas along the coast. The capital, Stockholm, is surrounded by water and has 1.5 million inhabitants. Sweden cooperates closely with other countries and has been a member of the European Union since 1995.

Sweden has many fascinating natural resources. Summers are mild and winters can be cold, though much more so in the far north than in southern parts of the country.

The Swedish Institute is a public agency entrusted with disseminating knowledge about Sweden abroad and arranging exchanges with other countries in the fields of culture, education, research and other sectors of public life.

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