

# **Implementation Plan of the Language Guidelines**

**2019–2023**

## Introduction

The Aalto University Language Guidelines are designed to support our university on its journey towards becoming a multicultural and multilingual environment where everyone is a full member of the community. In addition, the guidelines focus on the continual development of our two national languages as languages of science, and emphasise the value of language quality as an increasingly important indicator of high academic quality.

The language guidelines and their implementation plan have been prepared for the next five years. Aalto's internationalisation and multiculturalism are built on the basis of Finnish bilingualism. As our university becomes ever more international, English will increasingly become the common language of the Aalto community. Thus, it is natural and, in terms of resources, reasonable to invest in English as one of our common working language. We wish to promote the purposeful parallel use of languages, not an artificial trilingualism.

Communication and interaction are key challenges in internationalisation. According to the university strategy, Aalto University is a place where the best connect and succeed. Success requires not only participation, but ensuring the preconditions for participation and above all, the opportunity to understand and share.

The development of a multilingual environment requires much persistence and resources. The language guidelines, together with the implementation plan, set the direction for Aalto University, while leaving room for the schools and degree programmes to make their own language decisions. The guidelines and their implementation plan can contribute to a greater awareness of the importance of multilingualism and multiculturalism, which are seen as enriching our community and opening up opportunities.

The left column of the implementation plan table shows the guidelines and the right column the actions to be taken.

## 1. Research

High-quality language is part of high-quality research. A goal of the language guidelines is to support the language of research by providing training and support services. Another focus area is Aalto University's role in supporting the development of the national languages of Finland as languages of science.

Guideline	Actions
1.1 Research publications are characterised by fluent and consistent language.	Organising writing clinics and courses for researchers
1.2 Aalto University actively develops Finnish and Swedish academic terminology with different collaboration networks.	Aalto University participates with other universities in developing Finnish and Swedish terminology in networks such as the TUHA network.  A shared terminology for important concepts will be adopted at Aalto University.  The career systems will recognise as a merit the production of teaching material as well as the writing of academic texts for general audiences.

## 2. Learning and teaching

The language guidelines clarify the languages of the study paths of the degree programmes, and implementing the plan calls for careful planning and consistency. The share of courses taught in English is increasing, and the degree programmes offered by the university need to be seen as a whole, rather than as stand-alone programmes. We need to make clear and long-term decisions regarding teaching in Swedish in order to ensure Aalto University's status as a university that provides teaching also in Swedish. As our student body is increasingly international, studying Finnish, Swedish and English has to be made as easy as possible.

The language guidelines and its implementation plan for learning and teaching take into account the [Aalto University guidelines on the Language of Degree and Instruction](#) and [Aalto University General Regulations on Teaching and Studying](#) for teaching and study. These documents define the linguistic rights of Aalto students.

<b>Guideline</b>	<b>Actions</b>
<p>2.1</p> <p>Aalto University's languages of degree are Finnish, Swedish and English.</p> <p>Aalto University's main languages of instruction are Finnish, English and – in the fields of science, art and technology – Swedish as well.</p>	<p>The same system for the classification of languages of instruction will be implemented in all schools: the language of instruction will be specified in the curriculum and it must be followed.</p> <p>The key courses in bachelor's degree programmes which are taught in both Finnish and Swedish will be clearly defined and communicated on the student webpages.</p> <p>Aalto University has nominated and communicated the the persons designated to be in charge of ensuring support for Swedish and English speaking students and ensuring fluency in communications with students in these languages.</p>
<p>2.2</p> <p>In the fields of science, art and technology, Swedish-medium teaching is provided and Swedish-speaking students' learning is supported in Swedish.</p>	<p>Some of the basic courses in Finnish are also taught as parallel courses in Swedish.</p> <p>If, in the fields of science, art and technology, a course is offered in Finnish but not in Swedish, Swedish-speaking students will be offered the opportunity to complete exams and other coursework in Swedish.</p> <p>Swedish-speaking students are offered the opportunity to discuss their studies in Swedish in the fields of science, art and technology.</p>
<p>2.3</p> <p>Students who have applied to complete their bachelor's degree in Finnish or Swedish shall have the possibility to pursue also master's-level studies in that language.</p>	<p>Schools ensure that students who have chosen to complete a bachelor's and master's degree in Finnish or Swedish have the opportunity to either choose a master's programme taught in Finnish or Swedish, or in an English-medium master's programme, complete studies and write their thesis in either Finnish or Swedish.</p> <p>Students have the right to receive advice for their thesis in the language of the thesis.</p>

<p>2.4 All bachelor's and master's programmes must include in their intended learning outcomes the attainment of the language, communication, and intercultural skills relevant to the field of study</p>	<p>The learning outcomes of all degree programmes shall include these skills and their attainment shall be evaluated in the same way as other intended learning outcomes.</p>
<p>2.5 Good communication, language and people skills are part of the pedagogical requirements for teaching staff. Teachers are provided with pedagogical support and training.</p>	<p>In recruitments, pedagogical skills will be emphasised in addition to merits in research.</p> <p>Assessment of teaching competence entails a comprehensive evaluation of the different aspects of teaching.</p> <p>Student feedback is collected to support the development of teaching.</p>

### 3. Services

The need for all Aalto employees to possess good language skill increases as the university becomes more international. Through the use of foreign languages at work, the whole Aalto community is tied more strongly to the multiculturalism of the university. The use of a shared terminology and the consistent availability of documents in the different languages enhances the equality of languages at Aalto.

<b>Guideline</b>	<b>Actions</b>
<p>3.1 All Aalto students and staff members are given the opportunity to study Finnish, Swedish and English.</p>	<p>All students and staff at Aalto University will have equal opportunities to study Finnish, Swedish and English. Language and multicultural training is available for all Aalto members.</p> <p>International students and staff are actively encouraged to study the national languages of Finland.</p>

<p>3.2 Aalto University offers high-quality editing, translation and proofreading services in Finnish, Swedish and English.</p>	<p>Production of language services will be included in the job description of lecturers in foreign languages and considered in Language Centre recruitment.</p> <p>Outsourced services continue to be used.</p>
<p>3.3 Documents are written in fluent language where key terms are used consistently.</p>	<p>The translation tools at <a href="https://www.aalto.fi/services/dictionaries-and-glossaries">https://www.aalto.fi/services/dictionaries-and-glossaries</a> will be actively utilised and the most commonly used abbreviations will be added to it.</p> <p>Communications and training on language practices shall be increased.</p>
<p>3.4 Key documents concerning education are available in Finnish, Swedish and English.</p> <p>Internal documents concerning academic administration and services (such as forms, decisions and instructions) are mainly available in Finnish and English.</p>	<p>Decisions on individual students shall be communicated and implemented in Swedish if necessary.</p> <p>Decisions of the president, vice-presidents and deans as well as decisions and memos of academic committees are available in Finnish and English.</p> <p>A common document template for decisions will be produced, containing the content in both Finnish and English.</p>
<p>3.5 Aalto staff and students can participate in the activities of various working groups and committees of the university.</p>	<p>The various actors of Aalto University use Finnish and English in parallel. If the primary language of a meeting is Finnish, the material will be in English as needed when international staff is present.</p>

#### 4. Communication

Communication at Aalto University shall follow the university's language guidelines when using its communication channels (e.g. the aalto.fi website and social media channels).

Guideline	Actions
4.1 Communications are conducted with awareness of the situation, the communications channel and the language to serve the intended audience.	The user experience of communication channels are evaluated regularly.
4.2 The Aalto University website aalto.fi is published and maintained in Finnish, English and when necessary, in Swedish.	The main public content of aalto.fi web services is in Finnish, Swedish and English.  Internal content for personnel is mainly in Finnish and English. The key content for students is published in Finnish, Swedish and English.

#### Execution and follow-up:

The provost of Aalto University is responsible for implementation of the language guidelines. Implementation is coordinated by Leadership Support Services (LSS).

The Aalto University Equality Committee will monitor the implementation of the language guidelines in connection with the annual review process. Every five years the implementation of the language guidelines will be evaluated in the Aalto University Review.