

# Language policy guidelines for Nord University

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Nord University's language policy goal: "Safeguard Norwegian, promote Saami, improve English."

### 1. General

The following language policy guidelines shall help to secure the Norwegian language and Norwegian subject terminology, to develop the Saami languages and subject terminology, and to improve the use of English at Nord University.

The language policy at Nord University contributes to increased knowledge, social engagement and strengthened cooperation with society and business. The language policy guidelines contribute to developing the linguistic competence of its graduates, thereby strengthening their participation in the national and international labour market, and in general in the knowledge society.

The university must make arrangements for faculty, staff and students to develop a conscious relationship with language, and to develop the languages' connection to democracy, culture and communication.

The university must ensure that staff and students at the institution have access to the necessary aids, in the form of information, training and language services, in order to be able to make good language choices and deliver texts that maintain a high linguistic quality.

Norwegian is the primary language at Nord University. Norwegian has two distinct written varieties: Bokmål ('Book Language') and Nynorsk ('New Norwegian'), which are equally recognized by law.

Bokmål is the main written target form in the regions where Nord University is represented. The university's objective is to meet the requirements of the Act on Target Use in Public Services, where it is emphasised that Nynorsk is used in at least 25 percent of officially available circulars, announcements, information material and the like.

### 2. Saami

Nord University has a national responsibility for Lule Saami and Southern Saami in higher education and research.

In order to strengthen, develop and preserve the Lule Saami and Southern Saami languages, Nord University will make arrangements for the Saami languages to be both heard and seen on the university's campuses.

Additionally, the university will facilitate the further development of a Saami professional language. The aim is for Saami to become a relevant publication language, in addition to more professional staff acquiring Saami language skills.

### 3. Parallel language

Higher education and research have an international character. Language is an important tool for maintaining and developing the university's international presence.

English is the most widespread international language at Nord University, and this language is becoming more prominent in teaching and publishing. At the same time, the university must safeguard and develop the Norwegian language in accordance with the principles defined under section 1.

Parallel language must thus be a guiding principle in language policy, and must also stimulate international cooperation. Nord University will work to achieve an appropriate and sound balance between the national language and the international language of knowledge, English.

In the Sub-strategy for internationalization at Nord University, Nord University has defined a goal of increased mobility among academic and administrative staff, both incoming and outgoing. The language policy at Nord University shall contribute to the university becoming an attractive and inclusive workplace for employees and visitors whose first language is not Norwegian. Access to Norwegian language training and requirements for Norwegian language skills shall aim to contribute to strengthening social participation and belonging among foreign employees.

#### 4. Plain language

Clear and good language use strengthens democracy and is a prerequisite for a well-functioning university community. The principle of plain language, that is, correct, clear and recipient-adapted language, must be used as a basis for written communication to and from Nord University.

The purpose of plain language is to create text adapted to the recipient. Students and staff at Nord University must be able to express themselves in understandable plain language. This does not mean that all texts must be simple, or that texts must be free of technical language.

Plain English shall also apply to English-language communication.

#### 5. Education

a. The language of instruction at Nord University is normally Norwegian. The Scandinavian languages Norwegian, Swedish and Danish are considered equivalent as languages of instruction.

b. English is the language of instruction in courses and programmes that are part of the university's international curriculum study portfolio. English is relevant as the language of instruction in courses and programmes where English language skills form part of the learning outcomes.

c. Students are expected to know and be able to use professional language in both Norwegian and English. Requirements for knowledge of Norwegian do not apply to foreign students participating in international study programmes. Students who participate in courses in Saami languages and culture must know and be able to use professional language in Saami.

d. Where the language of instruction is English, students should be offered a Norwegian-English term list as part of the curriculum literature. This term list should contain an overview of the most important English subject terms translated into Norwegian.

e. Language skills must be part of the learning outcomes for degree-granting study programmes at all levels. For bachelor's programmes that are not part of the international study portfolio, English language skills should be assessed from the second year of study. In master's and doctoral programmes, English language skills should be emphasised.

f. Exams must normally be written in the language stated in the subject description, cf. Regulations on studies and examinations at Nord University §8-1. Bachelor's and master's theses written in Norwegian must have an abstract in English. Bachelor's and master's theses written in English must have a abstract in Norwegian. The requirement for a Norwegian abstract does not apply to foreign students participating in international study programmes.

g. Employees in teaching positions who do not speak Norwegian must be given access to Norwegian language courses and language guidance during working hours. All staff in teaching positions should be given access to English language courses and language guidance.

h. Scientific employees who do not speak Norwegian or another Scandinavian language upon employment should be able to understand Norwegian speech, handle questions in Norwegian from students and have an understanding of Norwegian for professional purposes, meaning that they can participate in Norwegian-language meetings, within two years of employment.

i. All students at the institution should have access to courses in academic writing during their full degree studies, to ensure the development of the student's language, text and genre competence.

j. All foreign students should be offered courses on Norwegian language, culture and society, adapted to the length of their study stay. Courses should preferably be credit-bearing.

## 6. Research

a. The individual researcher is free to choose the language of publication. When assessing the language of publication, it is natural to take both professional assessments and the communication possibilities with relevant national and international research environments into consideration.

b. The university must make arrangements for Saami languages to become relevant publication languages.

c. Doctoral dissertations written in Norwegian must have a summary in English. The same applies to doctoral dissertations written in English, cf. Regulations for the degree *philosophiae doctor* (ph.d.) at Nord University §18-1. All theses must have a short popular science summary in Norwegian.

d. The university shall encourage, through offering courses and in other ways, training and guidance in the area of writing scientific articles.

## 7. Dissemination and public relations

a. Dissemination to the general public must take place in the language that is most appropriate for the audience being addressed, and the form must be adapted to the recipient. The university must fulfil its responsibility for dissemination towards the general public by communicating research-based knowledge in Norwegian. Communication to special groups in Norway and to the international public should take place in English.

b. The university will provide training in popular science writing, which emphasises clear language and which stimulates increased publication in channels such as forskning.no, *Store norske leksikon* (the *Online Norwegian Encyclopaedia*), newspapers and specialist books.

c. The university will provide training and guidance in oral research communication that contributes to increasing Nord University's visibility in national and international channels and arenas.

## 8. Administration and information

a. The main signage at the largest study sites must be in Norwegian and Saami.

b. Information for current and potential students and staff must be drafted in English and made available on the university's websites and intranet.

i. English-language information must, as a minimum, include what is necessary for the individual employee/student to carry out their work, comply with their duties and understand their rights.

ii. The scope of English-language information must take into account the well-being and participation of foreign employees and students in the university community.

iii. The scope of English-language information should preferably help to strengthen the recruitment of foreign employees and students to Nord University.

iv. English-language information must include, but is not limited to, key documents, study plans, applicable laws and regulations, forms, guides, handbooks and information about organized activities.

v. The language committee can, through complementary guidelines, define content that must be available in English in the various channels.

c. Organizational units and roles must be named in English. The Universities Norway's (UHR's) term base must be used where possible. The university must also maintain and further develop its own English terminology base.

d. Administrative staff should have sufficient competence in English to be able to serve foreign students, staff and visitors in a satisfactory manner.

e. Study plans for study programmes dealing with Saami languages and culture must normally be published in one of the two Saami languages for which Nord University is responsible.

f. The English form used at Nord University is the British-English standard (Oxford English Dictionary).

## 9. Implementation and management

a. Implementation of the language policy guidelines must be included as part of the faculties' annual action plans.

b. The university must provide language services, such as language training and courses, language training and translation.

c. A language policy committee (the Language Committee), appointed by the university's rector, is responsible for following up and implementing the language policy guidelines and the university's language policy. The committee consists of employees in central management positions as well as a student. The committee has its own secretary. The committee reports to the board in the university's Annual Report on developments in language policy at the institution, and designs overall action plans for the implementation of language policy guidelines.