

Lund University, Faculty of Law (Sweden)
Law Schools and faculty cooperation

Legal Education in Sweden

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Lund University, Faculty of Law is one of six law schools in Sweden. The term “Law school” is not used, but all these have the right to issue the professional exam “juristexamen” (“juris kandidat” is equivalent and will still be used for a number of years). Beside Lund University the universities of Gothenburg, Stockholm, Umeå, Uppsala and Örebro have more or less independent Law schools. This exam is necessary to be a judge, prosecutor or member of the bar association (Advokatsamfundet).

The requirement for the professional exam is governed by a government regulation. The regulation is very general and the actual content is decided by the law schools. That also means that the curricula and pedagogical approach differs between the law schools. The program is 4.5 years long, 9 semesters. Generally, the students study general law the first three year and specialize the last three semesters at the advanced level, including a master thesis. All students have the equivalent of a LL.M. degree. The court system and the other actors trust the law school in providing their graduates with a good professional training.

The Swedish legal system is undergoing a change. The influence of international law especially the European law gives the courts a more important role than traditionally in Swedish law. The protection of civil and human rights has in one sense been strengthened. Two special features of the Swedish constitutional system have guarded this before. There has since the late 18th century been a strong, special protection of the freedom of expression with special fundamental (constitutional) laws protecting the freedom of the press and the freedom of expression in other media. The Freedom of the press act also contains the principle of free access to public document. This makes the Swedish public authorities transparent. The other special feature is the Ombudsman institution. The ombudsman has also since the 18th century protected the citizens from the public power. Via Denmark the institution has been exported all over the world.

Lund, Stockholm and Uppsala have special faculties of law and research is an important addition to the professional training. Studies for a doctoral degree normally take four years after the LL.M degree. The doctoral candidates teach. To become a faculty member you must hold a doctor degree.

Lund University, Faculty of Law

Lund University is located in the city of Lund in the very south of Sweden.⁴⁴⁶ Lund was once Danish (until the year 1658) and at that time the seat of the Danish archbishop. Lund University was founded by the Swedish king in the year 1666 in order to keep and make the new part of his realm Swedish. The Faculty of Law was one of the founding faculties. Today, there are eight faculties and about 40 000 students.

The Faculty of Law has about 2000 students. Most of them study the professional program for *juristexamen*. This program is given in Swedish mostly. There are three English master programmes (in international humanitarian law, it is run in cooperation with the Raoul Wallenberg Institute for Human Rights and two specializations with WIPO and ILO; in European business law, in cooperation with the Lund School of Economics; and in maritime law, jointly with the World Maritime University in Malmö, Sweden). In addition to that there are other English courses for exchange students. Outside of the master programmes some 70 international students come to the faculty and about the same number goes abroad. The ambition is that at least 25 per cent of the students in the Swedish Law program should spend one or two semesters abroad.

Faculty exchange and cooperation

One important goal of the faculty is to have a good international cooperation. One of the profiles of the faculty is have an international perspective on Swedish law. Connection to other faculties can take many different forms. The most common is exchange between individual staff members. It can be exchange between different subjects as Criminal law or History of law. Finally it can be a cooperation between faculties as such.

Where have we looked for cooperation? The closest ties are of course inside of Sweden. There are regular relations at all levels individual, subject and faculty. At the faculty level there are regular meetings between the deans/prefects and between the directors of studies. The curricula are different but a course taken at one Law school is generally accepted as part of a degree at the other schools. It is also a forum for discussions on grading and standards for grading. This cooperation has intensified during the last year, because there is a growing need for common standards and joint actions.

The next level of cooperation is between the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Norway). The languages are so close that it is possible to have conferences without using English.⁴⁴⁷ The cooperation is mainly on the individual and subject level. The cooperation on the faculty level is mostly on an ad hoc basis.

⁴⁴⁶ Lund is located close to Denmark's capital Copenhagen (of course on the Swedish side). The train services are integrated and the trip between Copenhagen Airport and Lund takes less than an hour.

⁴⁴⁷ Finnish does not belong to the Scandinavian language family, but Finland is bilingual with Swedish as the second language.

Exchange with the rest of Europe is also frequent. Much of it is on an individual level, but there are a number of European cooperation project sponsored by the European Union.

Cooperation with the rest of the world has become growingly important. Much of the cooperation comes from networks based on individuals. The faculty tries to establish cooperation with a small number of law schools in the world. The main philosophy behind this, is that our staff (not only the academic staff but also library and administration) and students may need the influence from other legal systems and other organisations. The best developed cooperation in this area is with Suffolk University Law School in Boston, USA. We also have this kind of closer cooperation with the Law faculty of Nagoya University, Japan.

The closest faculty cooperation is with two Vietnamese Law universities, Hanoi Law University and Ho Chi Minh City Law University. This is a partnership project *Strengthening Legal Education in Vietnam*. The project has been going since 1998 and includes development of the staff, the library and ICT facilities, and the management of the faculties. The project is financed by the Swedish development agency (Sida).

Student exchange is of course one important factor in exchange between faculties. Most of the student exchanges go through special exchange programs such as NORDplus (Denmark, Norway, Iceland and Finland) or Erasmus (in Europe). There are also university agreements that give opportunities for exchange. These programs also give opportunities for staff exchange.