



JÖNKÖPINGS  
**STUDENTKÅR**

Jönköping Student Union Policy Document, 2010-11-18

# Jönköping Student Union Policy Document

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## 1. Introduction

The Jönköping Student Union Policy Document is intended to assist the Board in making good decisions that are based on the interests of the Student Union's members. The Policy Document may be used by the members of the Jönköping Student Union to provide guidance and insight into the operational area of the Student Union and by the committees of the Student Union to establish goals in relation to their work, as well as in dealings with the University and external decision-makers.

The Policy Document should be revised regularly so as to stay current and relevant. The entire Policy Document is to work as a foundation for the plan of operations, as well as for other documents that Jönköping Student Union works with on a continuous basis.

## 2. The basic position of the Student Union

The basic position of Jönköping Student Union rests on the right of individuals to access education, and places each student at the centre of focus. No one should have to forego higher education because of factors such as gender, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, or ethnicity. Everyone should have actual equal rights, obligations, and opportunities, in reality as well as in theory, and the legal rights of individual students should be safeguarded at all times.

The State bears the entire responsibility for higher education. This entails the State assuming overall responsibility for providing students in Sweden with acceptable social and financial conditions during their period of study. These conditions are one prerequisite for the student being able to benefit from their period of study.

The academic environment should create the conditions necessary for meetings between first-, second-, and third-cycle students and the student should be seen as a co-actor in the education process and be able to influence both the planning and realisation of their education.

Student Union supports the fact that the University is owned by a foundation, and rejects the opinion that State ownership should be a requirement for a university to have the right to award academic degrees. The local regulations at Jönköping University should be at least as beneficial to students as those which are laid down in the Higher Education Ordinance – which relate to safeguarding the legal rights of the individual student, regardless of who owns the University.

With regard to students who pay tuition fees and are from non-EU/EES countries, the position of Jönköping Student Union is that these students are not to be treated any differently than the rest of the student population in terms of reception or services offered. Because the introduction of tuition fees in the Swedish educational system may be seen as a first step toward subjecting higher education in general to tuition fees, Jönköping Student Union also discourages the charging of these fees.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* higher education should be free of charge for all students



*that* no one should have to forego higher education for financial, social, ethnic, religious, or similar reasons

## **2.1 Student representation**

Through Jönköping Student Union, student representatives should gain seats on the ~~drafting and~~ decision-making bodies and committees of the University. It is important for the University to encourage student participation and facilitate opportunities for students to influence quality-assurance and improvement work.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* the University should actively work to ensure that students are able to influence the direction and conditions of their education and extracurricular student lives.

*that* the University should encourage students to become involved in their studies, as well as in activities beyond them.

*that* students should always be granted a postponement of studies in order to actively work as part of Jönköping Student Union.

*that* resuming studies should be facilitated and, when granting continued student aid, time spent working for Jönköping Student Union should be taken into account.

*that* a student who has been offered a place on a student exchange programme should have a place on the exchange programme for the following year if they choose to work for Jönköping Student Union instead of participating in the exchange.

## **2.2 Compulsory student union membership**

On July 1, 2010, compulsory student union membership was abolished for all state-owned universities and university colleges in Sweden. Because Jönköping University is owned by a foundation, members of Jönköping Student Union are not subject to the regulations governing student unions, student nations, and student societies at universities and university colleges, which were formerly in place to regulate compulsory student union membership. To ensure continued student representation at Jönköping University, the Foundation has decided to instate compulsory membership in Jönköping Student Union for all students at Jönköping University. This is stated in the document 'Regulations on first-cycle education at Jönköping University'.

Furthermore, it is important that student representation and lobbying on a national level, today largely undertaken by the Swedish National Union of Students (SFS), is maintained, and that



Jönköping Student Union continues to be an active player in this area.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* the financial status of the student unions must be stable so as to guarantee a continuous level of student representation.

*that* compulsory student union membership has been a successful method of raising funds, and that it should continue.

*that* the Student Union should work towards being less dependent on the revenues of compulsory student union membership, although this change should not affect current operations.

*that* the University should actively support the Student Union in the implementation of compulsory student union membership

### **3. Recruitment, admission, and selection**

#### **3.1 Recruitment**

Today's society places a great deal of importance on a high educational level. One of the most important factors in increasing the educational level of Sweden is universities. The position of Jönköping Student Union is that it is in the interest of the State, the national school system, and the future employers of students to increase public awareness regarding access to higher education. It is in the interests of Jönköping University to broaden its recruitment efforts, so that access is available to groups from non-academic backgrounds. A broadened recruitment effort is one means of increasing diversity in academia, and may broaden perspectives and increase the quality of education on offer. A broadened recruitment effort should not be viewed simply as a question of recruitment, but as a process that requires active contributions throughout the chain of education, from admission to graduation, in order to provide students from varying backgrounds and with differing circumstances with places in and equal opportunities to graduate from higher education.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* Jönköping University should actively work to recruit a broader range of students to the University.

*that* broadened recruitment should be viewed as a holistic issue, from admission to graduation.

*that* information issued by the University should be accurately oriented towards the target group in question, comprehensible, relevant, objective, and



accessible.

### **3.2 Admissions**

It is important that there are several ways into higher education, and that everyone has the opportunity to be admitted to and study at Jönköping University, regardless of background. Because of this, qualifications, selection, and graduation are important factors in the admissions regulations.

The Head of the Admissions Office at University Services has the power to make decisions regarding admission to first-cycle education for entire programmes and courses on behalf of the Schools. This means that the Head of the Admissions Office makes decisions in matters such as priority admissions, exemptions, and admissions on special grounds for programmes and courses. The Schools make decisions regarding admission to the later stages of a programme and admission on the grounds of special qualifications. Each School establishes the qualification requirements for first-, second-, and third-cycle educational programmes and courses. A decision to deny an applicant admission on the grounds of their not fulfilling the qualification requirements for first-cycle education may be reviewed. The applicant is then required to send a letter to the Admissions Office at Jönköping University within three weeks of receiving notification of the decision to initiate a review.

If an applicant has practical experience or possesses, through Swedish or foreign education, the qualifications required to complete a higher education programme, the applicant is to be deemed qualified. The purpose of this is to assess whether the cumulative competence of the applicant is sufficient to complete the education programme that they have applied to.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* the applicant should have the option of appealing decisions regarding qualification requirements and selection.

*that* work experience should be considered at selection, which will result in various different perspectives being brought into the University. This is to apply to both international and national work experience.

*that* requirements for special qualifications should only be imposed in cases where the competence that they represent is deemed to be essential to completing the education programme.

*that* several different methods are to be used for selection, and the qualifications of the applicant are to be taken into consideration.

*that* applicants are to have the opportunity to combine courses from different



university colleges and universities as part of their degrees.

*that* higher education institution admissions procedures should be adjusted to facilitate the transfer of higher education credits between institutions.

*that* the assessment of actual competence should be possible, and be used as a qualification for admittance to higher education.

### **3.3 Selection and selection criteria**

When there are more applicants than places, selection must be made with respect to the qualifications of applicants. In the case of equal qualifications/grade averages, the selection must proceed using other methods. The selection criteria at present are grades, the Swedish Scholastic Aptitude Test (SweSAT), other special tests, prior education, work experience, and special grounds. In the case of equal qualifications, Jönköping University practices selection by lottery. Jönköping University decides its own admissions regulations and selection criteria.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* quota-based admissions/positive discrimination should not exist.

*that* alternative selection methods (interviews, personal letters, etc.) for education programmes should be used to a greater extent so as to increase the significance afforded to personal suitability in selection processes.

## **4. Welcoming of students**

The manner in which a student is welcomed during the initial weeks is of utmost importance to the student's attitude to subsequent studies at Jönköping University. The welcoming of students is the shared responsibility of Jönköping University, Jönköping Student Union, and Jönköping Municipality.

The voluntary commitment of existing students to welcoming new ones is a prerequisite for the latter receiving a personal and rewarding introduction to the higher education institution. This commitment should be encouraged, and not be limited by the undertaking of studies. Through long-term planning and preparation, there is the possibility for existing students to voluntarily welcome new ones without negatively affecting their studies.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* the University has an overall responsibility for the welcoming of new students.



*that* students should be able to take part in a kick-off week prior to commencing their studies.

*that* existing students who voluntarily welcome new ones during the kick-off week are given the opportunity to commence their studies, and preparations for the coming semester, prior to the kick-off week so as to not fall behind during it.

#### **4.1 Academic introduction**

It is the position of Jönköping Student Union that Jönköping University should offer all students an introductory course, common to all students at the University, at an early stage of their education. The completion of this course is to be rewarded with higher education credits.

The course should introduce students to higher education by offering an opportunity to acquire academic and presentation skills, as well as knowledge about the organisation and traditions of the University, what it means to study at a university college, and the rights and obligations of a student. The course should also teach the importance of critical thinking and self-reflection, together with basic approaches to science.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* Jönköping University should hold an introductory course that is common to all Schools.

### **5. Housing**

Students are a heterogeneous social group, with varying needs and preferences. To many students, the place where they live is not only their home but also their main place of work, and so good housing conditions are a prerequisite for success in their studies. This is why student housing must be characterised by flexibility and diversity, and be viewed as an integral part of the academic environment. Students with disabilities should be guaranteed housing that is adapted to their needs. This should not cause any extra expense for the student.

Housing issues, whether caused by a lack of available housing or price levels above what students can afford, should not force anyone to forego their studies, neither in Jönköping nor at any other higher education institution. The goal of the housing policy should be to ensure that all students are satisfied with their housing situation. The issues related to student housing must be coordinated between the State, Jönköping University, and Jönköping Municipality. They share the responsibility for satisfying the future demand for student housing. When the number of places at the University is increasing, the quantity of available student housing is to increase at the same rate. Additionally, the rent paid by students for their housing is to be reviewed continuously, and assessed in proportion to



the type of housing and income of students.

When Jönköping University enters into agreements regarding student exchanges, it should assume overall responsibility for ensuring that exchange and guest students find housing of a reasonable standard during their studies at the University. Housing should be available at the time of arrival of students, and be reasonably priced. Housing for exchange and guest students should be integrated with other student housing in order to facilitate contact with Swedish students and Swedish student life.

The housing allowance should be organised such that all students in need of it receive it, regardless of age. The system for applying for and revising housing allowance should also be adjusted to simplify the process for the applicant, while also reducing the risk of incorrect estimations that can lead to the allowance being rebated.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

- that* both the State and the municipality, through directed efforts, should promote the construction of student housing, primarily in the vicinity of the University environment.
- that* access to student housing should be continuously reviewed.
- that* with regard to applications for housing allowance, student aid should not be considered to be a source of income.
- that* the level of housing allowance should not be a factor when setting rent.
- that* the level of housing allowance should not vary with the age of students.
- that* the University and municipality, together with the Student Union, should adopt and maintain a common approach to the issue of student housing.
- that* student housing in Jönköping should be reasonably priced.
- that* students should not have to decline places offered to them at Jönköping University due to a lack of housing.
- that* the housing guarantee should apply to all students at JU with education as a primary occupation.





## **6. Education and its forms**

### **6.1 Commissioned education**

In order for Sweden to maintain its international competitiveness and prosperity, the Swedish workforce must be among the best educated in the world. The only way of achieving this amongst ever-accelerating scientific development is for citizens to be prepared – and more importantly able – to continue to educate themselves, throughout their working lives as part of a life-long learning process. To make this possible, collaboration between the business community and universities needs to be intensified, both during first- and second-cycle education and in research. It is of great importance that the opportunities for professional university graduates and other groups on the labour market to access higher education be improved. This includes, among other things, commissioned education programmes, research in collaboration with industry, and opportunities for students to carry out parts of their education in collaboration with actors in the public and/or private sectors. However, guidelines for commissioned education programmes are required.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* commissioned education programmes should not be allowed to compete with regular ones

*that* companies and organisations must bear the full cost of a commissioned education programme, so that no resources are diverted from students enrolled in regular education programmes.

*that* commissioned education programme graduates should not be awarded higher education credits or academic degrees.

### **6.2 Education programmes and courses**

The purpose of education programmes is to guide students through the range of courses offered, and to guarantee the student access to courses that are awarded a degree. It is important that the qualification requirements and admissions regulations of the University are structured in such a way that a student who freely chooses courses has opportunity to combine them in order to receive a degree. Course syllabuses are important documents for students, because they contain information on the content and goals of the course.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* the established course syllabus should be available at least one month prior to the start of the course.

*that* it should be easy to transfer higher education credits earned through the



completion of courses at other institutions to Jönköping University.

### **6.3 Instruction/pedagogics**

Pedagogy is an interaction between teachers and students. Both parties are to be active and interested in order for the pedagogical process to go forward. The organisation of the course content and the type of instruction chosen are to be undertaken with the different needs of the student in focus, which requires a wide range of choice. The types of instruction are to be varied, encourage creative thinking, and be adapted to the course content and goals. To the greatest extent possible, different types of instruction are to be used at all levels – both in large and small classes.

Those who teach should be competent in their subject, committed, and possess pedagogical insight. At the beginning of an employment and when setting the wages of and laying off teaching staff, teaching skills and commitment are to be considered alongside scientific qualifications. The goal of the teacher is to support and encourage students to conduct independent, creative study, and to impart their knowledge. The teacher should stay informed regarding developments in their discipline, and incorporate new findings in their lectures. In order to make this possible, one requirement of the teacher is that they maintain a good relationship with individual students; this becomes particularly important when major portions of a programme consist of independent study, or when classes are large and there is an imminent risk of weak feedback.

Under normal circumstances, lectures are to be held in Swedish or English. In order for a course to be held in a foreign language, the teacher is required to speak the language well and master the terminology of the subject. Instruction in a foreign language should not be allowed to lower the educational quality of the course.

The document 'Policy with guidelines for teaching, examination and course evaluations, etc at Jönköping University' should be revised/updated when necessary, and be followed at all Schools by all staff and students to facilitate and clarify the intentions and regulations regarding, among other things, teaching.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

- that* the University must work to offer teaching staff in-service training courses on pedagogical approaches and methods
- that* pedagogical experience should be considered to be a very important factor at the beginning of an employment and when setting the wages of and laying off teaching staff
- that* the University should actively work to achieve a greater variety in terms of the



forms of instruction and examination. </254

*that* students have the right to a well-adjusted balance between teacher contact and individual studies with respect to the conditions of their education.

*that* teachers lecturing in any other language than their native language need to have well-documented language skills in the subject field.

#### **6.4 Placements and internships**

Placements and internships (VFU) are an important part of students' education, as they provide an opportunity to apply knowledge and skills in the workplace and facilitate the transition between studying and working life. It is important for students to be given accurate information on their rights and obligations during their placements/VFU, and that the placement/VFU is meaningful and relevant to their education.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* placements/VFU are important aspects of higher education, as they form an essential link to society as a whole and improve the employability of students.

*that* placements/VFU should be of high quality and be relevant to students and their studies.

*that* the rights and obligations of a student during a placement/VFU should be clear and well communicated as regards both the student and the workplace.

*that* the University should provide adequate protection prior to, during, and after a placement/VFU.

*that* all students should be offered the opportunity of a placement/VFU during their education.

#### **6.5 Course literature**

Course literature should, in order to be relevant to the society we live in, be rooted in a strong tradition of ideas and research. The international perspective should be given consideration. The quality of works and their relevance to the subject in question, including relevance to the goals of the course, should be the deciding factors in the selection of course literature. The University should also keep up with technological advances and adapt course literature so as to include e-books and other technologies that have emerged in recent years. It is important that all course literature be available to

all students prior to the start of a course.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* course literature should be relevant and provide a multifaceted perspective on the subject.

*that* an updated reading list together with a description of the course should be available to students at least one month prior to the start of the course.

*that* the University should provide bookstores with updated reading lists well in advance.

*that* reading lists should be available at the University library.

## **6.6 Course development, follow-ups, and feedback**

Each course/programme should be continuously evaluated to ensure that development never ceases. Evaluations should be performed as part of a collaboration between the students, teachers, and assistants. The goal of the evaluation is the same for all involved parties: constant improvement of the course/programme. Evaluation should not be seen as an activity to be performed after the end of a course, but as a continuous process. It should be possible for anyone who attends a course to discuss and influence its structure and content during the course, rather than only when it has ended. Scheduling a course evaluation on a set date may be a valuable tool in the hands of teachers and students for improving the quality of the programme. The purpose of a course must be made clear so that the students and teacher are able to shape how it is taught through mutual understanding.

Furthermore, each class should appoint students with special responsibility for course development, called 'course evaluators', who make sure that the opinions of students reach teachers and course coordinators. This is to ensure that all courses undergo development and that teachers and course evaluators

In order for students to feel that their evaluations are valued, it is required of Jönköping University, and the Schools of which it is made up, that students are provided with feedback on previous evaluations and descriptions of the measures taken to improve the quality of the programme in accordance with the wishes of past students. It is also important for Jönköping University to participate in both national and international evaluations, so that the programmes at the University are able to develop in relation to those of other universities and university colleges.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* the results of course evaluations, and any measures and standpoints taken by the School in question, should be presented at the beginning of the course



period.

*that* follow-ups and evaluations should be performed continuously, and that improvements that are possible to carry out during the course period are carried out.

*that* a course evaluation, including an evaluation of exams and forms of examination, should be carried out at the end of the course.

*that* the results of the evaluations should be commented on by the course coordinator, the examiner, and, if possible, a student.

*that* the results of course evaluations and measures taken – both those awaiting action and those already in place – should be documented for future reference.

*that* course evaluations should be characterised by objectivity – not personal attacks.

*that* evaluations should be seen as a continuous process.

*that* every course should have well-trained course evaluators.

## **6.7 Examination**

Course examinations are one part of teaching, and should be treated as such for both pedagogical and legal purposes. In examinations, it is extremely important to observe the diverse requirements of each student. In higher education, examinations should not function merely as measurements of knowledge, but rather as an opportunity for students to reflect on the knowledge that they have acquired during the course and connect together the various course elements. It is of utmost importance that examinations are carried out in the right and proper way. This is to ensure the legal rights of individual students. By legal rights, we mean the elimination of any immediate risk that the student runs of being accused of cheating or disturbing the peace, as well as that examinations are assessed and graded based on the student's performance, leaving aside personal opinion. Examinations should be carried out in lecture halls that are suited to this purpose.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* legal rights should characterise all forms and aspects of examinations.



- that* anonymous examinations should be introduced in all cases for which it is judged to be practical.
- that* the time set aside for an examination should be taken from the appointed course time, which implies that no examinations should occur at weekends.
- that* the scheduled time of an exam may not be altered at the last minute; notice should be given no later than five days prior to the scheduled date of the exam.
- that* more varied forms of examination should be used to a greater extent.

## **6.8 Degrees**

Regarding the awarding of academic degrees, Jönköping Student Union advocates an approach to knowledge that focuses on the fact that the student, through their education, has acquired the appropriate knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Students should thus have the right to be awarded more than one degree on the basis of the same course requirements, and should not be denied this on the grounds that each higher education credit awarded can only be used for one degree. However, degree certificates should make clear when courses have been included in more than one degree.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

- that* Jönköping University should be able to award more than one degree on the basis of partially or entirely identical course requirements, if the student meets the necessary requirements.
- that* degree certificates should make clear when courses have been included in more than one degree.

## **7. Internationalisation**

'Internationalisation' is a term that students at Jönköping University encounter every day. Today, the world is open to students who thirst for knowledge. Jönköping Student Union would like for Jönköping University to work actively to create an intercultural exchange, of which encounters, education, and understanding between cultures and countries are natural parts. Jönköping University should be Sweden's leading institution in the international arena.

### **7.1 Education and research at Jönköping University**

International exchanges increase understanding of international conditions. Visiting students, researchers, and teachers must be seen as a valuable resource with regard to education and research. Their active participation increases the breadth of knowledge imparted, and allows it to be discussed



in relation to different cultural backgrounds. Jönköping Student Union would like to view Jönköping University as a partner university where efficient and worthwhile exchanges take place; this exchange should be sustainable in the long term, and allow students and researchers from all over the world to meet.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* instruction in other languages than Swedish should be organised and made available to both Swedish and international students.

*that* teachers and students should be given the opportunity to study languages.

*that* teachers should be well-versed in the language they use when teaching, or in the language in which the course literature is written.

## **7.2 Studying abroad and performing research outside of Sweden**

Giving students and teachers opportunities to work abroad spreads information about and sparks interest in Jönköping University. This may in turn result in increased opportunities, in terms of both having foreign students and teachers visit Jönköping and helping Jönköping students and teachers to study and work abroad. Thus, it is very important for teachers and students to be given the opportunity to go abroad for both long and short periods of time, in order for them to experience international perspectives through education.

One basic requirement for international exchange to work is that there is an easily comprehensible system with clear rules in place for the transfer of degrees and individual educational elements.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* each programme should offer opportunities to study abroad.

*that* individuals who of their own accord organise studies abroad, placements, thesis work, research, or similar positions should be given encouragement, support, and guidance.

*that* students should receive adequate information on which higher education credits awarded for courses completed may be transferred when they are about to commence their studies in a country other than Sweden.

*that* it should be possible to appeal a credit transfer decision.





### **7.3 Integration**

Jönköping Student Union shares the vision of Jönköping University having become an international higher education institution in 2025. In order to be a truly international higher education institution, it is not enough to rely on figures such as numbers of international students, partner universities worldwide, courses given in English, or students on exchange semesters each year. When it comes to internationalisation, integration is an important aspect that is often ignored, as is the fact that all international students should be given the same opportunities as Swedish ones.

To the greatest extent possible, exchange students should be integrated into the normal range of courses offered. This is to give both them, Swedish students, and teachers as broad an exchange as possible during their stay at Jönköping University. In order to ensure that the quality of teaching does not suffer, it is important that foreign students are proficient in the language in which courses are taught.

Integration difficulties are often experienced when teachers and Swedish students lack intercultural knowledge that can facilitate integration. This can be improved through increased awareness and intercultural competence among teaching staff. The language barrier also causes issues when international students are finding their place in a higher education institution. Essential information should therefore always be made available in English so as to ensure that international students are not hampered by the language barrier.

To achieve the best possible outcome, the integration effort should be directed by both the University and the municipality, and be undertaken in collaboration with the Student Union.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

- that* the University should actively work to integrate the housing of international students with that of Swedish students.
- that* all students, regardless of nationality, at Jönköping University should be able to take part in the activities of the Student Union.
- that* there should be meeting places and activities where international and Swedish students may collaborate and exchange experiences.
- that* the University should require of students that they possess the language skills necessary to complete the course/programme they wish to enrol on.
- that* international students be given training in the Swedish language to a greater extent than occurs at present.
- that* teachers of courses with international students should be given intercultural





training by the University in order to promote integration in the classroom during the period of study.

*that* the University should ensure that placements/VFU are offered in Sweden to international students in the programmes in which this is a requirement.

*that* all official documents produced by Jönköping Student Union should be made available in English.

#### **7.4 The Bologna Process**

In the summer of 1999, education ministers from 29 European countries, along with the rectors of universities and university colleges from all over Europe, gathered to discuss the development of higher education in Europe. The vision of creating a common European area for higher education by 2010 was formulated in the so-called 'Bologna Accords'. Starting from the accords, the Bologna Process was initiated, and development is still in progress. Jönköping Student Union feels that it is of the utmost importance that the University participates in the European integration and collaboration for higher education that is the intended outcome of this process. The overall objectives of the Bologna Accords are to facilitate mobility and employability, and to increase Europe's competitiveness with regard to education.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* the Bologna Process goal of creating a European system, i.e. facilitating education exchanges, is beneficial, as it will offer students more opportunities to see and understand attitudes towards learning and knowledge in other countries and cultures. Furthermore, it will make it easier to use a degree abroad after graduation.

##### **7.4.1 ECTS**

The ECTS grading scale is implemented by most of the participating countries of the Bologna Process, and is a relative grading system. From a legal perspective, individual students must be awarded the grade that they deserve, regardless of the relative distribution of grades among students. Although the ECTS grading scale has some advantages, it may bring about a narrowing of the number of forms of instruction and examination used, which would be counterproductive to, among other things, fulfilment of intended learning outcomes.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* each School should decide for itself whether to use the ECTS grading scale, and any use of the system should be made only after extensive consequence analyses have been carried out.

### **7.4.2 Provisional regulations**

The new education and degree awarding system is to be applied to programmes that begin after the end of June 2007. This means that some of those students who were admitted prior to the reform may want to use the new degree-awarding system when applying for a degree, while others may want to conclude their studies in the old system. According to the provisional regulations, anyone who commenced their studies prior to July 1, 2007, is able to conclude their studies pursuant to the regulations of the old system until the end of June 2015. It should also be possible for students to have their higher education credits according to the new system stated in the degree certificate if they began their studies within the old system.

Jönköping Student Union feels that it is positive that the provisional regulations are so generous, but is of the opinion that this requires flexibility on the part of the higher education institution in order to be able to guarantee the student the education that they applied for in the first place.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* the provisional regulations at Jönköping University should correspond to those recommended in the Higher Education Ordinance

## **8. Student healthcare and social security**

### **8.1 Student Health operations**

Student Health is available at Jönköping University for all students at under- and postgraduate levels.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* Student Health should be available on the campus of the University.

*that* student healthcare should be directed primarily toward preventative and curative efforts, and work towards the goal of diminishing health risks for students during their period of study.

*that* Student Health should offer free care for students at Jönköping University in the form of:

- ❖ Curative treatment
- ❖ Advisory nurses
- ❖ Counselling and support when seeking care
- ❖ Preventative programmes or courses to minimise the risks of contracting student-related illnesses



*that* the University should provide Student Health with the resources necessary for catering to the entire demand for student healthcare.

*that* Student Health should pursue a permanent level of contact and collaboration with the University and the Student Union, in order to facilitate the identification of health risks in the student environment and to be within the reach of students.

*that* Student Health should be included in the University's development plan.

## **8.2 Social/health insurance system for students**

A functioning and all-encompassing safety system is crucial in order for students to take on and complete their studies. A safe period of study is a prerequisite in order for students to perform at their best. It is also a prerequisite in encouraging more people to pursue higher education. It is the position of Jönköping Student Union that a functioning safety system promotes lifelong learning and contributes to securing competency for the future.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* the waiting period ('karensdag') during which no sickness benefit is received should be shortened from 30 days to 7 for students.

*that* students should be entitled to take part-time sick leave.

*that* health insurance should be connected to one's status as a student, rather than to the receiving of study aid.

*that* Jönköping University should provide clear and accessible instructions regarding illness and injury.

## **9. Discrimination, diversity, and integration**

### **9.1 Discrimination issues**

On January 1, 2009, the Discrimination Act entered into force in Sweden. Its purpose is to combat discrimination and promote equal rights and opportunities regardless of

\* Sex

sexual orientation

\* age

\* transgender

Within the framework of their activities, universities and university colleges are to conduct goal-



oriented work that actively promotes equal rights and opportunities based on the forms of discrimination listed above; prevent and counteract the harassment of all students; annually draw up a plan that includes an overview of the actions needed to promote equal rights and opportunities; and investigate the circumstances relating to cases of alleged harassment and, should it prove necessary, take appropriate steps to prevent further harassment.

Students at Jönköping University who experience discrimination/harassment can turn to the ombudsmen for equal treatment (OLIK) who work at every School. The matter is then investigated by the 'discrimination committee'.

However, the Student Union finds that there are other forms of discrimination/harassment that do not always fall within the grounds of statutory discrimination. It may e.g. concern arbitrary assessments, repeated hindrance to a student's completing their education on the grounds of vague directives, or deviations from the internal policy and guidelines of the University. In the absence of 'supervision' from the Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ), we find that the University must take such issues seriously and draw up clear and communicative guidelines.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* the University should work continuously with issues regarding discrimination and provide students with information regarding their rights.

*that* the University should maintain an established and functioning preparedness for equal treatment.

## **9.2 Diversity**

It is important to view people's differences as an asset, rather than a problem. Everyone is equally entitled to a higher education in an environment in which differences are represented, recognised, and viewed as assets for increasing the quality of education. To achieve this, the University is required to use inclusive forms of education and teaching, where students' differing perspectives are utilised and learning styles are taken into account.

Furthermore, knowledge about and attitudes towards differences must become a more explicitly expressed part of many programmes. The Student Union views the fact that issues relating to homosexual, bisexual, and transgender (LGBTQ) individuals are not given a more prominent position in education as a problem.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* the University must actively work to utilise students' differences so as to achieve increased diversity and educational quality.

*that* LGBTQ and gender perspectives should be natural parts of all programmes.

## **10. The work and study environments**

All students are entitled to a good work environment, both physically and psychosocially. Work environment issues should not obstruct or make it difficult for anyone to take part in education. Jönköping University is responsible for the study and work environment, and should see to it that it is adequate for all students. In order to make constant improvements to the work environment, it is important that students be guaranteed some measure of influence over the planning for this.

The physical work environment at Jönköping University must be of a high standard. This goes for both general requirements and those specifically affecting a work place. These requirements do not apply only to scheduled hours. The work environment of students also includes the places at Jönköping University that they make use of in their studies outside of scheduled hours. The number and capacity of such places must be adequate to fulfil the need that students may have to study either alone or in groups.

The psychosocial work environment includes a great number of factors, all of which must work together in order for the individual to be comfortable. The activities of Jönköping University should be organised with respect to the psychosocial work environment. The work climate at Jönköping University should be such that an open atmosphere between all active parties at Jönköping University is created.

Students with disabilities may have special needs which Jönköping University should take into consideration. To cater for these needs, special efforts on the part of staff should be made and forms of assistance provided so that these students have the same opportunities to study as others.

Student Health is one of the most important actors within the work environment of Jönköping University, and its activities should be directed primarily towards preventative and curative efforts. The preventative work of Student Health should have a broad scope in order to counteract various work environment problems, both physical and mental. Student Health should develop alongside Jönköping University, and thus increase in size in step with the University.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* students should have the same rights and opportunities to influence their work environment as the employees of Jönköping University have.

*that* a vibrant campus environment with places for eating and drinking, taking a break from studying, and recreational activities should be available to students



in Jönköping.

*that* the University and the Student Union should work to constantly improve the work and study environments of students.

*that* the best interests of students are to be considered in the planning and running of the health and wellness centre.

*that* students must be given opportunities to plan both their studies and spare time. In order to achieve this, it is a requirement that both the planning of and system for supplying information about the education works well.

*that* student counsellors should work closely with students during their entire period of study. Student counsellors should also function as personal advisors. In order to be able to consider a student's situation in its entirety, Student Health, the authority responsible for reviewing applications for student aid, and student counsellors should coordinate with one another.

*that* the State must grant adequate funds to make higher education available to individuals with disabilities.

*that* Jönköping University should pay special attention to the particular needs of students with disabilities.

## **11. Student aid**

Students should have the same financial rights as other citizens, and the financial situation of students should be seen from a holistic perspective. In addition, the education financing system should guarantee students an adequate standard of living. Education is a personal investment as well as a societal one. Viewed from this perspective, Jönköping Student Union feels that it is reasonable for the individual and the State to assume shared responsibility for financing education. Many students must work during the holidays to make a living, and students should not have an obligation to repay money to the State as a result of this. It is also of utmost importance that the State, by issuing guarantees, secures loans for students whose credit ratings would not normally allow them to be granted loans to finance their studies.

Studying abroad is an essential part of the education approach and internationalisation efforts of Jönköping University. Thus, any students who wish to should be given the financial opportunity to participate in an exchange or study abroad programme.

A study strategy must be introduced parallel to the so-called 'work first' principle in the social security system. This is because students are rarely included in the social security system, as it is



currently connected only to work. Students should be able to maintain an adequate standard of living at times when their social conditions change. Thus, Jönköping University feels strongly that students should have the same right to basic social security as other citizens do. Just like the rest of the inhabitants of the municipality, students should have the right to income support when the need arises.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

Student aid in general

*that* the system should satisfy the needs of all individuals who choose to study.

*that* the student and the State should share the economic responsibility for financing education, in such a way that it becomes practically possible for the student to repay the loan. Half of the total amount of student aid should thus be a loan, and half a grant.

*that* the total amount of student aid given must be more closely connected to the general cost of living.

*that* the State should make it possible for students who have maintenance obligations to children to study in the same way as students without children are able to.

*that* students should be able to receive extra student aid if their circumstances are special.

*that* the limitation on income for students receiving study aid (the exemption threshold known as 'fribeloppet') should be abolished.

Regarding studies abroad

*that* if the total amount of student aid offered in another country differs from what is available when studying in Sweden, the grant-to-loan ratio should be the same as for studies in Sweden, and not be simply added as an additional loan.

*that* the total amount of student aid must be adapted to the local price level for studies abroad, in such a way that an adequate standard of living is achieved





after paying rent, buying course literature, and dealing with other study-related costs.

### Repayment of loans

*that* there should be a lower income limit for the repayment of loans, and that repayment instalments and amounts should be connected to the ability of the individual to make them.

*that* for income above the exemption threshold, the annual fee should increase gradually to avoid high marginal effects. When a student has maintenance obligations to children, a higher income limit for repayment should apply upon the receipt of retirement pension, death, or when there are special grounds, the entire loan should be written off.

### 11.1 Hidden charges within education programmes

According to Section 10, Chapter 1 of the Higher Education Ordinance, education at the University should be exempt from fees.

As Jönköping University is a foundation, it is not governed by the Higher Education Ordinance. However, the University has decided that the regulations that are in place should be at least as beneficial to students as the Higher Education Ordinance.

At present, there exist hidden charges for students at Jönköping University, such as travel expenses, the cost of living during placements/VFU, and educational material in the form of clothes, etc.

For example, it has come to pass that students, weeks before the beginning of their placement/VFU, have been notified that they have been placed elsewhere in Jönköping Municipality, entailing them paying for housing twice during the period.

In a study conducted by UKÄ, a template was presented outlining which expenses the government authority feels should be covered by the University and which by the student (Appendix 1 – Proposition relating to hidden charges). In the report, the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education states that it is desirable that higher education institutions minimise students' educational expenses as much as possible. The Agency also presented its view regarding charges, as laid out in the table below.

Expenses that students should pay:	Expenses that the University should pay:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Course literature (including compendiums and larger hand-outs).</li> <li>- Certain study materials, for example working materials (such as textiles, clay, colours, etc.), if the result subsequently becomes the property of the student.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Articles of consumption in labs should be paid for by the University.</li> <li>- The University should assist with costs related to travelling and potential increases in the cost of living. If the University cannot assist with costs related to extensive, compulsory travelling, an alternative, free-of-charge, option must be offered.</li> </ul>





<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Essays/exam work should be viewed as study material, and therefore be paid for by the student. Students participating in seminars should pay for copies of their essays, i.e. the costs of copying.</li> <li>- Clothes and other personal equipment.</li> <li>- Computer discs and transcripts.</li> <li>- Costs related to copying</li> <li>- Travel in the immediate surroundings.</li> <li>- Reasonable costs of living in relation to a study trip/placement.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- If the use of expensive equipment is central to the course/programme, it is desirable in certain instances that the University lend this equipment.</li></ul>
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Jönköping University has subsidies for travel and housing, but it is up for debate as to whether these are large enough. Furthermore, there are no guidelines for what happens when free-of-charge options are not available.

Examples of which subsidies students can apply for can be found in the document - **Benefits for students at the School of Health and Welfare in connection with internships in places where there is no higher education institution**. This reimbursement is valid in the event that the lodgings obtained covers it.

## 12. Doctoral education

In order to maintain high-quality doctoral programmes, it is important that announcements of and admission to doctoral programmes is conducted in a transparent and legal manner. The announcing of available positions should be made both nationally and internationally, and it is the assumed ability of the applicant to complete the programme that should form a basis for admission, rather than whether the applicant has completed undergraduate studies at the higher education institution where they are applying for a position.

Furthermore, it is important for doctoral students to have a general feeling of security during their period of study. To achieve this, all doctoral students should be admitted at and employed by the higher education institution in question.

The position of Jönköping Student Union is

*that* announcements of and admissions to available doctoral positions should be conducted on both national and international scales, and in a transparent and legal manner



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*that* doctoral students should be admitted to and employed by the University to ensure secure, reasonable working conditions and access to the social security system.