



Sweden and Kau for new employees

It is important to us that you, as a new employee, receive clear and helpful information before arriving in Sweden and starting your employment at Karlstad University (Kau). This information guide covers the most common questions new employees tend to have and is designed to make your start with us as smoothly as possible. Of course there is always more to learn, and if you have any further questions about your employment, please do not hesitate to contact the HR Office – we are here to help.

Arrange before leaving for Sweden

Before you apply for a residence permit, make sure to renew your passport if it is about to expire, you cannot be granted a residence permit for longer than your passport's period of validity. The same applies to accompanying family members.

If you need a visa, residence permit, or work permit, please note that researchers from non-EU countries should apply for a residence permit for researchers (not a work permit). You will need to attach a hosting agreement signed by the host at the University. For more info please visit: [The Swedish Migration Agency](#). For information about what applies between your country and Sweden, please see your [Swedish embassy's website](#).

Make sure you are fully insured throughout your entire stay in Sweden. For more information please visit: [Insurance](#).

Finding a place to live will be one of the first things to arrange once you decided to move to Sweden. For more information see our page here: [Finding accommodation](#).

Your first weeks

The first thing you should do when you arrive in Karlstad is to register your move with the Swedish Tax Agency. You will then receive a unique 10-digit personal identity number, which you will use for most transactions in Swedish society. For more info: [Report your move and apply for a personal identity number](#).

To open a bank account in Sweden, you need to verify your identity with a valid passport or Swedish ID-card. For more information: [Bank account](#).

Before your Swedish bank account is opened, we recommend that you keep your current bank account so that we can pay your salary. If no account details are provided to the payroll office, your total accrued salary will be paid once your new account is registered. Please note that Sweden is largely a cashless society, so it is advisable to have a debit or credit card available for everyday purchases when you arrive.

Although most people at the university speak English and key information is available in English, it is valuable to have a basic understanding of Swedish. In addition, several positions require that you learn Swedish during your first years here. Karlstad Municipality offers free Swedish courses (SFI) during both daytime and evening hours. Read more on the [Karlstad Municipality website](#). You can also discuss with your Head of Department any opportunities to take part in Swedish language training offered at the university.

Introduction

A structured introduction at both university-wide and departmental level is essential to ensure a successful start for our new colleagues. It provides clarity around Karlstad University's values, while building a sense of belonging from day one. Each semester, we organise an employee introduction program, called "Welcome Day" for new employees. You are welcome to register [here](#). Your department is also responsible for providing a local introduction tailored to your position at the university.

See below for some brief information about the employment terms, rights and responsibilities that apply to employees at Karlstad University: [Employment info](#).



FAQ

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What kind of work culture do you have at Kau? Work-life balance is highly valued. We promote a healthy balance between work and personal life, and overtime is generally discouraged unless absolutely necessary.

What about vacations in the summer?

There is paid vacation during the summer (late June until early August, according to the local work-time agreement). Vacation may be shifted from the summer to other times of the year, by individual agreement with the head of department. Most industries and many authorities and municipalities have limited availability during this period, which is useful to keep in mind when planning your start in Sweden.

How do I address my manager or colleagues?

First names are standard, even for senior leadership. Titles are rarely used in everyday interactions.

Is there any dress code?

There is no specific dress code at Karlstad University. Employees are expected to dress in a way that is appropriate for their role and the situation, while feeling comfortable at work.

What documents do I need to work legally in Sweden?

A valid residence permit (if applicable), a personal identity number, and registration with Swedish Tax Agency are essential. You must register with the Tax Agency for tax purposes and to obtain your personal number.

After moving to Sweden, you'll need to visit the Tax Agency in person and provide proof of residency and the purpose of your stay (e.g. work or studies). You'll usually receive your personal number by post within 4–6 weeks, sent to the Swedish address you registered, so ensure its correct and accessible.

How do I open a Swedish bank account?

You'll need your personal identity number or a valid ID, and sometimes proof of employment or address. Check with the bank to see which additional documents may be required. Most banks have English-speaking staff.

What do I do if I or my children get sick?

If you fall ill or need to care for a sick child, you must report this according to your department's routine. You'll receive information about this during your introduction.

If you're off sick for more than seven days, a medical certificate is required. Once you return to work, you must report your sick leave via the self-reporting system, Primula. This also applies to shorter absences or other types of leave.

For medical advice or to find your nearest healthcare centre, visit 1177.se or call 1177 for guidance in English. Please note that you are not automatically registered with Försäkringskassan (the Swedish Social Insurance Agency). To access benefits such as the EU health insurance card, you must submit form 5456. This can be done online (with BankID) or at a local service centre.

How do I book teaching facilities?

Once you're here, you'll have access to our intranet, *Inslaget*. See more information [here](#). The Schedule Coordination team can assist with booking teaching venues and is located in room 3A 337, feel free to drop by! During your departmental introduction, ask what is expected of you in this regard. It's also a good opportunity to familiarise yourself with other important aspects of how things work at Kau, such as grading systems, course structures, and promotion procedures. These topics are useful to discuss during your introduction at the department.

More info to help you get started with us can be found here:

- [Buying insurances](#)
- [Taxes and Tax Reliefs](#)
- [New in Sweden - Information](#)
- [Karlstad service center - Public services](#)

Living in Karlstad:

- [What to do in Karlstad?](#)
- [Contacting the municipality](#)
- [Tax declaration](#)

More Sweden tips:

- [Swedish Workplace Culture](#)
- [18 things to know before moving to Sweden](#)

Once again, a warm welcome to Kau!