Decision regarding assignment to the University Director to form *one* organisation for joint and coordinated support services at KTH

This decision has been signed electronically.

**Decision**

Through this decision, the President gives the University Director the assignment of forming *one* organisation for joint and coordinated support services at KTH. The overall aim is to ensure high-quality and cost-effective support services that contribute to KTH’s competitiveness by optimising teachers’ and researchers’ time for teaching and research activities.

This decision entails:

- a merger of the schools’ support services and the support that currently exists within the University Administration (GVS).
- an assignment to the University Director to develop a plan for the continued development of the support services at KTH.
- that the responsibility for all support services at KTH is based on the President’s delegation to the University Director and can be delegated to the Heads of Department within the current University Administration (GVS), and with this decision can also be delegated to the Heads of Administration at KTH’s five schools.
- ensuring equitable and accessible support for students, teachers/researchers and staff across the whole of KTH, and that KTH lives up to the role of government agency.
- that all staff are included in the merger.
- that the programme for analysis of support services is implemented in the work aimed at achieving a joint and coordinated organisation of the support services at KTH.

This decision is an initial step and aims to set out the direction for the development of joint and coordinated support services. The plan for the continued work is as follows:

- March–May 2022 – on assignment from the University Director, the Heads of Department and Head of Administration within the current University Administration (GVS), together with the Heads of Administration at the schools, will produce
documentation for an overall plan regarding how the merger is to be carried out within different areas of support. The plan will be presented as a basis for the President’s decision on a programme directive in June.

- June 2022 – on 7 June the President will decide, through a programme directive, on the overall plan for how the merger is to be carried out under the leadership of the University Director.

- October 2022 – the President will decide on the overall organisation for the support services at KTH following the merger.

- October/November 2022 – the President will decide on KTH’s Operational Plan for 2023, and the University Director will decide on an operational plan for 2023 regarding all support services at KTH.

- 1 January 2023 – the merger will come into effect.

The President’s decision on a programme directive in June 2022 will include:

- an overall mapping and analysis of various areas of support, including with regard to work duties and financial and staff resources respectively, as a basis for how the merger is to be carried out within different areas of support.

- how the needs for support within education and research, as well as in relation to KTH’s role as a government agency, are identified and assured in the work involving the merger.

- how the work is organised, including in the form of a project organisation, steering groups and reference groups.

- forms of collaboration with the staff organisations.

The matter at hand

In 2014, KTH carried out an assessment of support services [Administrative Assessment Exercise, AAE] which demonstrated the need for further development of the support services. A number of the results are still relevant to the continued work.

In KTH’s Development Plan for 2018–2023 it is stated that KTH’s support services should be professional and relevant. A concentration of support functions at a joint school or KTH level can provide increased accessibility and professionalism. The Development Plan also particularly highlights the need to strengthen the support organisation for research through clearer goals and greater integration, in order to provide researchers with common access to the various support functions. In parallel, a reorganisation was carried out involving the amalgamation of KTH’s 10 schools into five schools as of 2018.
As an initial step in the ambition to continue developing the support services at KTH, the existing university administration (UF) transitioned into the university-wide University Administration (GVS) in 2019.

During 2020–2021, an assessment of KTH’s research was carried out through the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). The results include bases for further development of the support for research. These will be dealt with in the work involving the establishment of the joint and coordinated support services.

In April 2021, the President decided on the Programme Directive\(^1\) for development oriented analysis of KTH’s support services. The overall aim of developing the support services as a whole at KTH is to ensure uniform and effective support, with a high level of quality and cost efficiency. The support services must with great compliance balance the support to teachers and researchers with the requirements arising from KTH’s role as a government agency for higher education and changes in the outside world.

In KTH’s Operational Plan for 2022 it is stated that “the university-wide and activity-specific support functions must interact and strengthen each other”.

Furthermore, in January 2022, the President decided on principles for the governance of KTH’s IT development\(^2\) and administration (V-2021-0842) and the University Director’s responsibility for issues concerning organisation, roles and functions within KTH’s IT development and system support. The decision constitutes an important precondition for the coordination of IT-based development of the support services and KTH’s digitalisation.

This decision regarding assignment to the University Director to form one organisation for joint and coordinated support services at KTH represents a further step in the development of equitable and accessible support services for students, teachers/researchers and staff across the whole of KTH. It also means that the support is designed uniformly, with the use of automation/digitalisation tools where relevant, and situationally with specialist competence where this is most appropriate. The merger covers the entirety of the support services at KTH, which also entails a review of the organisation of the current University Administration (GVS), which came into effect in 2019.

The coordinated support provides a number of effects:

- A freeing up of resources for education and research, which will contribute to KTH’s competitiveness.
- A clarification of the various contributions made to KTH’s education and research by teachers/researchers and staff involved in the provision of support services.
- An increased opportunity for each school’s management team to focus further on the strategic governance and development of the school’s educational and research activities.

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1 Programme Directive
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• A joint organisation contributes to a critical mass in the form of clusters of competence in the various areas of support, across organisational boundaries. This creates conditions for overall delivery, cross-functional work methods and a high level of quality and efficiency in each area of support.

• An increased opportunity for staff involved in the provision of support services, both as a group and as individuals, to use and further develop their skills and knowledge based on designated responsibilities and work duties. Overall, this creates conditions for a good work environment and KTH’s attractiveness as an employer.

• Increased cost control as a basis for a cost-effective contribution from the support services at KTH.

Professional support services have a good understanding of the conditions for education and research and the needs and motivation of students, teachers/researchers and staff in support services. The merger into a joint organisation for support services provides improved conditions for jointly identifying how the support services can best contribute to education and research. A precondition for the successful development of the support services, and thus the creation of value for KTH, is a culture characterised by cooperation and mutual respect for our various contributions to KTH’s education and research.

There are a number of success factors associated with the work involving the merger.

• Managers at all levels acting as sponsors for the merger.

• Proactive HR support, including in the form of change management for managers.

• Dialogue with operational units regarding the need for support for education and research.

• A joint planning process for the support services.

• A joint strategic supply of skills and knowledge for the support services at KTH. An initial step in this work is to ensure that all recruitments within the support services at KTH are prepared jointly by the schools and the functions within the University Administration (GVS), with support from the HR Department.

• Ongoing work and planned development continues in parallel with the merger.

• KTH’s rules of procedure, the President’s delegation to the University Director and Heads of School, and the rules of procedure for the University Administration (GVS) are reviewed, along with other relevant regulations.

This decision has been made by President Sigbritt Karlsson following a report by Senior Administrative Officer Malin Ryttberg. Present at the decision were Deputy President Mikael Östling, Management Secretary Eva Fredriksson and President of the THS Student Union Teodor Elmfeldt.

KTH Royal Institute of Technology
Sigbritt Karlsson, KTH President

Malin Rytberg, Senior Administrative Officer, University Management Office

Appendix 1: The path to one organisation for joint and coordinated support services at KTH

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Appendix 1:

The path to one organisation for joint and coordinated support services at KTH

Analysis of support services

In May 2021, the President decided on the Programme Directive\(^3\) for analysis of KTH’s support services. The overall aim of developing the support services as a whole at KTH is to ensure uniform and effective support that, with a high level of quality and compliance, balances the support to teachers and researchers with the requirements arising from KTH’s role as a government agency for higher education. By further developing KTH’s support processes, resources will be freed up for education and research. This further development will take place through the creation of a structure for the continued administration and development of support services that facilitate rapid changes and adaptations based on KTH’s internal needs or changes in the outside world. Together, this will lead to professional and relevant support services that contribute to KTH’s competitiveness, enhance KTH’s attractiveness as an employer and create conditions for students and staff across the whole of KTH, including all campuses, to receive uniform support.

The work involving the development of the support services will be based on teachers’ and researchers’ needs for support and the requirements arising from KTH’s role as a government agency. The need must then be weighed up against available resources. The multifaceted support services will create value for the recipients of the support, which could include managers and leaders in their management work as well as students, teachers, researchers and other staff members. In the Programme Directive for analysis of support services it is also stated that automation/digitalisation should be considered in the development of each area of support, as well as the supply of skills and knowledge required for professional, uniform and effective support.

During 2021 the programme work has focused on creating order and structure in the organisation of the work concerning support services, in particular within the University Administration (GVS). In line with the design of the programme, the Heads of Administration at the schools and the University Administration (GVS) have participated partly in the Priorities Committee, and partly through the regular joint meetings with the Heads of Department within the University Administration (GVS). The five Heads of School, the Vice President for Digitalisation and the THS Student Union have been continuously involved through the steering group for the programme.

A key result of the programme work is the development of a model for managing the support services. This includes rules of procedure and delegation (decided in June 2021), a planning and monitoring process for the University Administration (GVS), which is synchronised with KTH’s Operational Plan for 2022, and an operational plan for the University Administration in 2022. Within the framework of the programme’s organisation, a Priorities Committee consisting of the Heads of Administration at KTH’s schools and the University Administration (GVS), as well as the Head of IT and the Head of HR, has held frequent meetings facilitated by the programme secretariat. The Priorities Committee has focused on issues of responsibilities and assignments, a common understanding of the meaning of order and structure, a common decision-making structure for development of the support, a model for prioritisation of development and mapping of ongoing development initiatives within the support services at KTH. Even prior to

\(^3\) Programme Directive
the decision on the programme, HR was a prioritised area in the form of the ongoing work
involving a new system for payroll and travel claim administration. In addition, the HR area,
with its sub-areas in the form of planning of staffing levels, strategic supply of skills and
knowledge, leadership development, change management and work environment issues, is
crucial for the development of more efficient support services. A related theme during 2021 has
been change management for the Heads of Administration at the schools and the Heads of
Department within the University Administration (GVS).

The programme secretariat works on behalf of the University Director to coordinate and support
various development initiatives within the support services in the form of method support and
facilitation of meetings and process mappings. In January 2022 the President also decided on
the organisation of KTH’s governance of IT development. A key factor in the programme’s
results to date are the close dialogues that have been conducted between, in particular, the
Heads of Administration at the schools and the Heads of Department within the University
Administration (GVS), with the aim of learning about each other’s organisation of support
services and identifying areas for potential development, where value is created through joint
work between the schools and the University Administration (GVS).

Overall, the work within the programme for analysis of support services has entailed an order
and structure both in the developed dialogue between the schools and the University
Administration (GVS), and in the form of a process for planning and monitoring of the support
services, including rules of procedure and delegation. The assessment is that a next step on the
path to the achievement of professional, relevant, uniform, joint and coordinated support
services with a high level of quality and efficiency at KTH, is to form one organisation for joint
and coordinated support services at KTH.

From analysis to merger

A next step on the path to the achievement of high-quality and effective support services is a
merger between the support services at KTH’s schools and the support that is currently
organised within the University Administration (GVS). In concrete terms, the merger means
that the responsibility for all support services at KTH is based on the President’s delegation to
the University Director and can be delegated to the Heads of Department within the current
University Administration (GVS), and with this decision can also be delegated to the Heads of
Administration at KTH’s five schools. This line responsibility includes responsibility for staff
and resources. Through the merger, the support services can be managed, designed and
conducted based on a holistic perspective and an overall responsibility for deliveries within each
area of support. Many of the support processes at KTH are cross-organisational within the
schools and between the schools and the University Administration (GVS). With the goal of
coordinated support that is accessible, equitable, uniform and situationally adapted across the
whole of KTH where relevant, the various areas of support will be mapped and analysed to
ensure their creation of value for recipients of the specific support. The cross-organisational
nature of many support processes also means that there is a need for synchronisation between
different sub-processes.

The current organisation of the University Administration (GVS) has been in effect since 2019.
Therefore, in order to ensure the achievement of joint and coordinated support services at KTH
which optimise the support in each area, it is necessary to perform a review of the organisation
of the current University Administration (GVS). The five schools at KTH each constitute large organisations in their own right where the school management team needs to surround itself with support functions that possess knowledge of the overall context at KTH as well as the more school-specific aspects. Consequently, part of the review of the support areas involves ensuring the existence of relevant support for the school management teams. Such support can lessen the administrative burden on the school management teams and provide increased scope for the Head of School to exercise the strategic management of the education and research activities.

Through the University Director’s responsibility for a cohesive KTH line in the organisation of the entirety of support services, scope is provided for coordinated and joint support which is equitable and accessible across the whole of KTH.

All staff are included in the merger that will create the new joint organisational structure. As the design of different areas of support is clarified, staff involved in the provision of support services will be given the opportunity, as necessary, for new or changed work duties and development of relevant skills and knowledge. With the support of the HR Department, initiatives are also being undertaken with regard to leadership and communication as well as a strategically developed supply of skills and knowledge for staff involved with the provision of support services. The change process associated with this merger also presupposes proactive HR support in the form of, for example, change management for managers. Overall, a joint organisation of the support services at KTH entails an opportunity for further professionalisation of various support functions. The work involving the merger will be conducted in close and systematic dialogue with the staff organisations in relation to opportunities for professional development as well as work environment issues. The forms for this dialogue will be further developed in the President’s decision on a programme directive June 7, 2022.

Resources, in the form of both staff and financial resources, must be dedicated to the development of the formation of a coordinated organisation for support services. This means that KTH is investing in the creation of efficient support services. The starting point is that the work should be carried out by experts in the operational activities. With the objective of joint support across the whole of KTH, the merger means that all support service roles will include, as necessary, the ability to contribute to the joint development of various forms of support. During 2022, resources for IT-related development will be made available to enable KTH to invest in more efficient support services. Overall, this means that the merger may initially entail increased costs in the form of IT infrastructure as support for automation/digitalisation and assurance of a strategic supply of skills and knowledge.

In conjunction with this decision, the ongoing analysis of support services, which commenced in May 2021, is being transitioned into the programme for joint and coordinated support services at KTH. The results that have been achieved and the ongoing work are thus incorporated within the framework of the new programme. The results produced to date by the analysis of support services are included in the basis for this decision.

Success factors for the merger of KTH’s support services

There are a number of success factors associated with the merger. The University Director’s mandate regarding the formation of one organisation for the support services is established partly in the assignment from the President, and partly through KTH’s managers at various levels acting as sponsors of the development of the support services. The President’s delegation of the responsibility for all support services at KTH means that a review and adaptations need to
be performed in relation to the rules of procedure and delegation at KTH. Closely linked to this sponsorship is proactive HR support in the form of, for example, change management for managers in contexts where communication support must be included.

A success factor for the achievement of support services that are both equitable and accessible is the dialogue concerning needs for support within education and research, as well as in relation to KTH’s role as a government agency.

Yet another success factor, and a tool, is a joint planning process for the entirety of the support services at KTH. A common model for the allocation of financial resources to the support services at KTH will therefore be developed prior to the 2023 fiscal year. An aspect that is closely related to the issue of resource allocation is that of automation as a tool for increased uniformity within the support, where relevant, together with increased digitalisation. Work is already under way in these areas, partly through the President’s decision in January 2022 on principles for KTH’s IT development, and partly through the assignments held by the Vice President for Digitalisation at KTH.

Another equally important tool in relation to resource allocation is the strategic supply of skills and knowledge to the support functions at KTH. The work involving the merger includes the development of a model for support services with relevant skills and knowledge that contribute to a high level of quality and cost-effectiveness and thus also to KTH’s competitiveness. The general trend in relation to staff involved in the provision of support services indicates that these staff members possess an increasingly high level of education. This means that this category of staff are qualified to work with a high degree of autonomy, which in turn places demands on specifying work duties that match the capacity of these staff members, as well as the right leadership. Together, this represents two key aspects of KTH’s attractiveness as an employer for staff involved in the provision of support services. Another aspect that is linked to KTH’s attractiveness as an employer is KTH’s development and management of the digital workplace, which is a facilitator for attracting staff with the right skills and knowledge.

The ongoing work concerning the provision of support to education and research, as well as in relation to KTH’s role as a government agency, will continue during the work involving the merger. The same also applies to development work that has already been planned. The work involving the merger impacts different activities in different ways and will entail opportunities for staff to be involved in the work to varying degrees.

**A multi-step process on the path to joint and coordinated support services at KTH**

The work involving the merger must take place in several steps, some of which will overlap. During the spring of 2022, the Heads of Department within the current University Administration (GVS), together with the Heads of Administration at the schools, will produce documentation for an overall plan regarding how the merger is to be carried out within different areas of support, i.a. regarding tasks and what financial and human resources are required.

Examples of relevant support areas could include education, research, finance, HR, premises, etc. The starting point for these mappings and analyses will be to create conditions for each support area’s overall delivery, cross-functional work methods and a high level of quality and efficiency in each area of support. The principle of equitable and accessible support for the user will govern the direction of this work. Consequently, the work to be performed during the spring
will include proposing how the needs for support within education and research, as well as in relation to KTH’s role as a government agency, are to be assured in the work involving the merger. The plan will be presented in the President’s decision on the programme directive in June 2022.

The support services at KTH are multifaceted, and the organisation must therefore be adapted to the function of each area of support, taking into account the level of service and the skills and knowledge required for each support area to be able to provide high-quality and efficient service. The work to be performed during the spring will therefore also include proposing how the work should be organised, for example in the form of a project organisation, steering groups and reference groups. Knowledge and experience of KTH’s Heads of department at the schools and other management personnel make an important contribution to identifying the needs in various support areas. The organisation of the merger for each area of support will also include proposing what the forms of collaboration with the staff organisations should look like.

The rules of procedure and delegation at KTH provide a framework for the organisation of KTH’s support services. Consequently, in parallel with the mappings and analyses of the support areas, a review and adaptation of relevant regulations will be commenced during the spring. The joint planning process resulting from the merger means that the work involving the development of a joint model for the allocation of financial resources will commence in conjunction with this decision. This will be an important tool in terms of ensuring the right service, the right skills and knowledge within support functions and the right costs for the various areas of support, and will contribute to a reduction of duplication of work and sub-optimisation within the support services.

The HR area has already been highlighted as an important precondition for the organisation of joint and coordinated support services at KTH. During the spring of 2022, the HR support will be intensified with regard to change management for managers at all levels as well as the work involving staffing plans and the strategic supply of skills and knowledge. A specific aspect of this work is that, as a consequence of this decision, all recruitments within support services at KTH must be prepared jointly by the schools and the relevant departments within the University Administration (GVS), with the support of the HR Department. Together, this will provide a basis for the planning of staffing levels, professional development and the strategic supply of skills and knowledge.

The University Board, the President, Heads of School, other overall management functions, staff organisations and the student union will receive information about the progress of the work on an ongoing basis, e.g. through special reports. Furthermore, models for the involvement of teachers, researchers, other staff members and students will be developed and presented in the programme directive, in order to capture and assess, in the best way possible, the needs for support services in the various areas of activity.

Following the President’s decision on a programme directive in June 2022, the work involving the merger will proceed to the next step. The focus of the work until October 2022 and the President’s decision on the overall organisation of the support services at KTH will be to further concretize the work involving the merger within each area of support.
Risk management

In February 2022, in the lead-up to this decision, a risk workshop was arranged and attended by the President, the Deputy President, the University Director, the Heads of School at KTH’s five schools, the Heads of Administration at KTH’s five schools, the Heads of Department within the University Administration (GVS), the Central Collaboration Group and the programme secretariat for the analysis of KTH’s support services.

The support services are multifaceted in terms of forms of support, functions and the skills and knowledge required. This means that risk management must be part of the design of each area of support and will therefore be concretized in the decision on the programme directive in June. Risk management in relation to the work involving the merger will thereafter be handled on an ongoing basis in close dialogue with the staff organisations.