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International Students

AAE Self-evaluation report

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Executive summary

One of the visions of KTH is to be one of Europe's premier international technical universities with a high degree of attractiveness for international students. A challenge for the administrative support structure is to meet the demands resulting from this vision at all levels of the organisation.

The AAE project "International students" is therefore of importance in order to discern and clarify the administrative processes and to evaluate, analyse and identify potential areas for improvement. The project lays the foundation for further studies and points of action to be taken in order to identify the areas within the administration that need to be strengthened/enhanced in order to achieve the stated objectives.

The self-evaluation and analysis addresses the following areas:

- Processes that serve as tools in order to initiate directed recruitment activities and which are not part of the regular organized recruitment activities but are of importance in broadening and strengthening the efforts of KTH to increase the number of international degree students to the same level as before the introduction of tuition fees.
- Recruitment and communication
- Study administration
- Student support at KTH

Conclusions from the self-evaluation process including input from stakeholders:

- As a result of the defined KTH goals and with a view to global trends, it is clear that developments will lead to an increase of the international student population, including the number of fee-paying students. As the student population grows it will become necessary to further adapt internal routines to different internal and external needs and stakeholders.
- There is a lack of common/official strategic documents with set priorities, which leaves some of the strategic realization to the administration. With different units within the University Administration and ten Schools involved in the operative parts, there is lack of an administrative organ with official authority to coordinate efforts and make decisions. In addition, without coordination and clear administrative structures, individuals in the organisation shoulder or are allocated areas of responsibility on a more personal level without back-up – a vulnerable situation.
- There are a number of organizational structures within the organization not only within the University Administration but at School level. There is no one common model for how the Schools organize themselves, when it comes to the administration of international students and the support given to this group. The division of responsibility both between units within the University Administration and between the University Administration and Schools is in some cases unclear and it is a challenge to coordinate efforts and information.
- Decision-making processes are randomized and disparate. Initiatives come from different actors and it is not always clear through what administrative channels the initiatives should be processed, which in turn leads to confusion, unclear authority decisions and individual actions. In addition to this, it is also unclear what administrative functions are or should be involved at what levels and the allocation of responsibilities between these.

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1 Background and scope

One of KTH's biggest challenges is to attract the best students, the best teachers and researchers, and to make sure to offer administrative support to these in their actions and activities. This administrative support will enable teachers and students to study and work in an efficient and inspiring environment. The support shall inspire, reflect and support KTH's creativity and excellence, create cohesion and ensure that KTH follows the Parliament's and the Government's intentions with KTH as a university.

These are the goals for the overall administrative support– as well as that of the University Administration – as formulated in KTH's Vision 2027. With a view to the AAE 2014, the ambition is to highlight the University Administration's management and planning process in order to gain insight into how we systematically work to concretise and realise the vision's intentions.

One of the questions to be answered is how the administrative support contributes to the development of KTH operations. Another question is to map who is responsible for the assignment of various tasks and what are the competences at various levels of the organization, with respect to giving the assignment and performing the given task. The AAE project “International students” is therefore of importance in order to discern and clarify the processes and to evaluate, analyse and identify potential areas for improvement.

One of the visions of KTH is to be one of Europe's premier international technical universities with a high degree of attractiveness for international students. KTH's position as a leading technical university is to be strengthened and manifested in the most relevant ranking lists. The numerical targets for 2016 regarding international students are (for comparison figures for 2012 and 2013 are to be found in annexe 1):

- 700 recruited beginners at advanced (Masters) level from the EU/EEA-area;
- 1000 new registered tuition-fee paying students as a result of enhanced recruitment efforts in the prioritized regions and other efforts;
- 700 of KTH's students will spend at least one semester abroad on exchange studies and the number of in-outgoing exchange students is balanced.

These goals require ample resources and well-functioning administrative routines. This project lays the foundation for further studies and points of action to be taken in order to identify the areas within the administration that need to be strengthened/enhanced in order to achieve the stated objectives.

1.1 Delimitations

The project encompasses a mapping of international students with the status of degree- or non-degree seeking students and incoming exchange students, all at advanced/Masters level.

Four student groups have been identified within the areas specified above: regular degree-seeking programme students, incoming exchange students within agreements, fee-paying non-degree seeking students and students within bilateral (e.g. double degree students) or multilateral agreements (e.g. Erasmus Mundus students). The self-evaluation and analysis cover the period from the student's first contact with KTH until the student has received his/her Degree Diploma or certificate (on completed exchange studies).

The self-evaluation and analysis will address the following areas:

- Processes that serve as tools in order to initiate directed recruitment activities:
 - International agreements for cooperation in education

- Special ventures – European student recruitment projects for degree seeking students, Science without Borders, Recruitment agreements in China

The above mentioned processes are not part of the regular organized recruitment activities but are of importance in broadening and strengthening the efforts of KTH to increase the number of international degree students to the same level as before the introduction of tuition fees.

- Recruitment and communication
- Study administration
- Student support at KTH

The individual processes will be described under respective heading.

The project does not include mapping of PhD students and outgoing exchange students. This in no way reflects on the importance of these two groups. In addition, the project focuses exclusively on the administrative support structure. Aspects such as increasing or decreasing number of Masters' programme offers, academic focus areas and pros and cons regarding prioritized areas are not part of this project's scope.

1.2 Administrative Units involved in the processes described in this project

The different functions at the University Administration involved in the various processes are the following:

Student recruitment (KIR/IR)

Marketing activities to recruit international degree-seeking students:

- Information on web
- Printed material
- Social media, e.g. Facebook for international students
- Campaigns and competitions
- Student ambassadors

International relations (KIR/IR)

International cooperation projects and mobility:

- Coordination of student and staff exchange (incoming and outgoing)
- Agreements with partner universities
- Joint programmes and degrees
- Activities and projects in prioritized regions (Brazil, China, India and Southeast Asia)

International Strategies (KIR/IS)

Provide support and analysis regarding internationalization of education. Develop and improve routines, primarily for fee-paying students. Examples of activities:

- Support in project applications and management (e.g. EU-programmes such as Erasmus+)
- Coordination of communication to international students
- Internal communication, newsletter

- Joint programmes and degrees
- International networks (Cluster, T.I.M.E., Deans Forum)

KTH Academic Registry (AUA)

- Admission of degree-seeking students and information to applicants regarding application and admission
- Coordination of scholarships and issues regarding tuition fees
- Coordination of processes for documentation of academic results, transcripts of records and issuing of degrees
- Management of study administrative support systems

International Student Office (AFS/ISO)

Service and support to international students, after admission.

- Arrival and introduction activities
- Accommodation
- International Students Desk; civic issues and practical information
- International Study Advisor

Finance Office

- Tuition fee invoices

Several other units are involved in activities related to international students, e.g. the Planning and Evaluation Office, KTH Business Liaison and Alumni. However these are not central in the processes described in this report.

Schools

At School level resources vary a great deal depending on the administrative structures and prioritization of resources. A general picture can be found in annexe 2, where number of individuals are specified and then converted to full-time equivalents (FTE).

University management

In addition to the administrative structures described above, the international processes are governed by the academic management of the university. Key players here are the Deputy President, the Vice-Dean of Faculty and the Vice-President for International Affairs. To assist in the process of strategic decision-making, the President has established the International Advisory Group (IAG), tasked with the management of international policy and strategy issues. The IAG is led by the Deputy President. The members of the IAG include one representative from each School (faculty), the Vice-President for International Affairs, , the Senior Advisor International Strategies, and a representative of the student body.

A Working Committee meets every second week to compile a list of topics and prepare the agenda for the regular IAG meetings. This Committee is also chaired by the Deputy President and the Vice-Dean of Faculty and the Vice-President for International Affairs are members. . Other members of the Committee are representatives of various administrative departments from the University Administration (e.g. the Head of the Legal department).

1.3 Methodology

The report is divided into defined separate sections, each describing essential central administrative support structures related to international students. The structure in the report is based on an initial mapping of the processes described in the text. All the process maps are to be found in the annexe part of the report. The resulting text is written from the perspective of three key factors: service, cost and competence.

Internal reference group

The stakeholders are represented by the internal reference group, with representatives from the Schools including several GA (Directors of first and second cycle education), several PA (Programme directors), several Heads of Administration of Dean's Offices, several UA (Heads of Educational Administration/Office), International coordinators (dealing mainly with exchange students) and student representatives from THS (the Student Union). At the meetings with the internal reference group, we have also invited staff from the University Administration in order to increase the dynamics in the discussions.

Student focus group

The international students have also been represented through focus groups with selected students from the defined categories.

Stakeholder analysis

A stakeholder analysis has been performed during meetings and workshops with the internal reference group, during in-depth interviews with faculty and selected administrative staff and during separate meetings and interviews with the student focus groups. The student focus groups have also participated in surveys with questionnaires.

2 International agreements for cooperation in education

2.1 Process description

This process covers the activities and functions involved in setting up and deciding on agreements for student exchange, i.e. the process of prioritizing and actual administration of inter-institutional agreements that control the mobility of students for studying part of their education program at a host university. The majority of these are the so called Erasmus-agreements. Bilateral exchange agreements with institutions outside Europe also belong to this category, process description annexe 3A.

A second category of exchange agreements are those who aim to develop mobility of degree-seeking students. Most of these agreements are for dual degree-cooperation. Incoming students through these cooperations are counted within the number of degrees (master degrees and engineering degrees) allowed for each of the Schools, process description annexe 3B.

Categories of exchange agreements described in this report

During a long period of time, KTH has been a popular choice for students from our partner universities, especially within Europe, and KTH has had substantially more incoming exchange students than outgoing. In 2013, KTH had 1058 incoming (2012:1372) and 618 outgoing (2012:509) exchange students, which is a good step towards greater balance than previous years. The current objective states that KTH should have 700 outgoing exchange students by 2016.

In the strive to achieve a better balance, the KTH Schools have been given specific targets regarding numbers of in- and outgoing exchange students in the operating instructions (*Verksamhetsuppdrag*). For most Schools, this means a rather drastic reduction of incoming students. As a consequence, KTH has designed a more strict exchange agreement process divided into three groups of partner universities.

- Approximately 40 prioritized European universities have been identified for long-term investments in exchange. As far as possible, agreements are central and a plan for the extent of the exchange has been drawn up.
- Exchange agreements with universities outside Europe are normally also handled within the University Administration. Since the introduction of tuition fees, KTH aims to secure an approximate balance in numbers with these universities and the extent of the exchange is expected to remain stable.
- Local exchange collaborations are left to the Schools to prioritize and the number of incoming students from these universities is expected to fall.

The selection and nomination of exchange students takes place at the partner university and as long as the number of students does not exceed the given quota with that particular university, the student is normally accepted by KTH.

Main groups of cooperation agreements covered in this process

A student exchange is normally set up bilaterally. The agreements themselves are very simple documents in terms of content but are important as they confirm the commitment by the signing partners to welcome up to a certain number of students per year, with no tuition fee demanded by the host institution, and to give support to the students with study counselling and often to help find accommodation. For universities with substantial tuition fees, and/or legal constraints regarding reciprocity, it is necessary to keep a balance in the exchange. Since 2011 this is the case also for Swedish institutions.

Agreements must be approved by the President. The processing of mobility agreements is currently delegated to the Vice-Dean of Faculty. Signing of Erasmus-agreements is delegated further to the university's Erasmus Coordinator. Since the Erasmus agreements including numbers of exchange places are now decided by the Vice-Dean together with the agreements outside of Europe the signing of the documents is a mere formality.

Student exchange is very much dependent on trust and so it is crucial that it is clear what is agreed in terms of what academic areas and levels that are involved and other possible limitations for the cooperation. A close contact between staff at the cooperating institutions and familiarity with the curricula is an absolute advantage and therefore long term commitments are preferred.

Erasmus-agreements - Since the start of the funding by the European Union to encourage mobility in Europe, agreements for student exchange between European institutions are normally set up as part of the current EU-programme. KTH has registered over 1.800 Erasmus or equivalent agreements since academic year 2000/01.

Bilateral agreements - Regular exchange agreements which are not Erasmus agreements, that is with universities outside Europe: 76 valid agreements in 2013/2014, 268 in total since 1998.

Double Degree agreements – Degree-seeking students pursuing the five year engineering degree: 25 valid agreements, 65 in total since 1999. Case study annexe 3C.

Dual Master's agreements - Degree-seeking students pursuing the master's degree: 12 currently valid agreements, 15 in total since 1999.

In autumn 2012, spring 2013 and autumn 2013 approximately 630 exchange agreements were processed. 370 of these were approved. The rest were generally expiring agreements that were not renewed. The very large number of processed agreements in this period was due to the large number of Erasmus-agreements which were due to expire.

Memorandum of Understanding, MoU - A non-committing agreement often signed to start a cooperation: 25 currently valid MoU:s, 75 in total since year 2005. MoU:s are signed by the Deputy President on delegation from the President.

2.2 Process analysis

The academic staff and the administrators involved in agreements and student exchange form the main part of the know-how for developing international cooperation. The Dean's Office at each School has administrative staff (international coordinators) responsible for maintaining relationships within the student exchange partnerships, keeping track of the exchange agreements and providing support to the academics responsible for the validation of studies.

The more advanced exchange cooperation, mainly double degree mobility, needs involvement of professors in positions as Undergraduate Directors and Master Programme Directors to check how to match the contents of the programmes.

The Schools approve cooperation that affects them directly and the Deans normally delegate to the Director of undergraduate studies to supervise the prioritization of agreements. A number of the Schools have set up a board of faculty staff to make recommendations for different decisions on internationalization issues; this board is often called the International Advisory Group of School YY. The Programme Directors of master programmes are also in many Schools involved in recommending various exchange agreements.

The administrative support in the University Administration provides the University Management with a general screening function and supports the faculty in the development of agreements. The processing of university wide exchange agreements is largely executed by the administrators in the unit for International Relations (KIR/IR). The same unit is also responsible for the IT-system, together with AUA, that handles applications for out- and ingoing students and functions as a register for all agreements. For university wide agreements IR is responsible for communication and information. The responsibility for general agreements is spread out on a number of coordinators at IR. Each of the prioritized regions (Brazil, China, India and South East Asia) has one administrator and one professor assigned to develop cooperation activities and have control over the exchange agreements. Erasmus agreements in Europe are handled by one administrative function that also holds the role as the Erasmus coordinator. The rest of the world, mainly USA, Japan and Australia, is handled by another administrative staff member belonging to IR.

The number of administrative full time equivalents (FTE) at School level, allocated to the administration of exchange agreements is specified in annexe 2. The average estimated by the Schools is 0,5 FTE's allocated to this task. The figures vary depending on whether the School considers time spent on visiting partner universities as time devoted to agreement development or not.

3 Special ventures- European student recruitment projects for degree seeking students, Science without Borders, Recruitment agreements in China

3.1 Process description

Three special ventures are described in the following process description. For the details of each process, please refer to the annexe 4A, 4B, 4C.

- European student recruitment projects for degree seeking students, initiated by the European Union.
- Science without Borders (SwB), initiated by the federal Brazilian Government where scholarships are available for students and scholars to perform studies and research in Brazil and abroad. Recruitment agreements in China, initiated by the responsible academic for the prioritized region China.

EU-projects

Whenever a call for proposal is published, an internal communication process starts from the Communication and International Relations Department (KIR) towards the Schools and the University Management. EU-Project proposals are initiated and ranked at School level and prioritized at University Management level. According to the outcome of this process, KIR provides its support to the submission of the proposals. In case of project proposals of institutional relevance prioritized by the University Management, KIR is in charge of the entire submission process.

The process is mainly carried out by staff with experience in EU project cycle management at KIR and at School level. According to internal regulation, Schools intending to submit a project proposal need to appoint a project coordinator, a project administrator and a project accountant. In many cases this kind of expertise is not available at School level and the expectation of support from KIR can be too high compared to the available resources. In recent years there have been cases of proposals submitted by individual academics who did not inform the management of the relevant School. This resulted in selected projects with no resources allocated and no formal "owner" at School level.

Science without Borders (SwB)

The University Management decides on available course packages in agreement with the Schools and informs the Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR) about the decision.

Recruitment agreements in China

When an appropriate university is identified, the University Management decides whether an agreement should be signed and which scheme should be applied. There are two kinds of schemes: 3+2 called pilot projects (after three years of studies in China, the students come to KTH for two more years, to finalize their bachelor and at the same time continue their studies towards a master's degree) and 4+2 called recruitment agreements (Chinese students move to KTH for a period of 2 years after completing their bachelor's degree in China in order to continue their studies towards a master's degree). In the case of 3+2 the University Administration consults the Schools regarding suitable programmes to be offered and the University Management takes the final decision regarding available programmes within the scheme before signing the agreement with a university. 4+2 agreements can be signed without consultation with the Schools since students have already completed a bachelor when applying to a Master programme.

3.2 Staff involved

When it comes to SwB and recruitment agreements in China, they are managed by staff allocated to the relevant Prioritized Region (Brazil, China, India, South East Asia) and staff, primarily Programme Directors, at School level. Each prioritized region has been allocated a responsible academic with previous cooperation experience in the area and also one FTE administrative staff. More staff units are allocated to China given the large number of cooperative ventures at different levels and given the high expectations on student recruitment.

KIR provides support to the University Management and to the Schools throughout the processes and involves the relevant divisions within the university administration whenever needed. KIR informs the Schools about newly approved projects and Specific Initiatives in internationalization via the internal networks (Heads of Educational Administration Offices, Programme Directors, Directors of first and second cycle education), internal newsletter and by reporting to the IAG representatives at each meeting. In spite of this, the further reporting and dissemination at School level has not always been as extensive and accurate as is necessary in order to allow all the actors to be aware of the ongoing initiatives and related regulations. When it comes to project submission, there are clear and high expectations on the School level about the support to be provided by KIR but there is not always a clear and formal allocation of tasks and responsibilities at KIR that allows an automatic and efficient service in this sense.

3.3 Cost including key indicators

The required resources depend on the number of proposals to be submitted under each EU call. It is hard to quantify the costs related to these activities due to the number of departments involved at different levels (KIR, Finance Office, Schools, Legal Department, International Student Office and Admissions Office).

The action plans for the Prioritized Regions have different focuses when it comes to cooperative activities and have different levels of ambition as regards recruitment of fee-paying students. For example a relatively high number of fee-paying students are recruited in China. In South-East Asia (especially Singapore) the focus has been on a high volume of student exchanges, while in Brazil the student recruitment at different levels is under development (in particular under the umbrella of SwB). When it comes to India, student recruitment, student exchange, research collaboration and links with industry are equally developed and still growing, in particular a lot of effort is being carried out in order to attract excellent fee-paying students. For these reasons, an estimation of the costs related to the prioritized regions is possible since specific staff is allocated, although it is hard to quantify the amount of work each person carries out in relation to international student recruitment. Moreover, also in this case several units within the university administration are involved at different levels. To give an overview over the resources allocated to the Prioritized Regions:

Administrative Staff 6 FTE (Full time equivalents)
Academic Staff 1,1 FTE where China has 0,5 FTE and Brazil, South-East Asia and India has 0,2 FTE respectively

In addition to this around 550000 SEK is allocated for travel expenses, and 140 000 for participation in student fairs and other recruitment activities.

3.4 Process Analysis

The routines described are aimed at optimizing the available resources in order to maximize the process output in terms of excellent and relevant applications. The introduction of tuition fees has created severe conflicts between the EU Programme rules and the Swedish legislation, which makes it very difficult if not impossible for Swedish universities to be a part of certain types of programmes without breaking rules from either side. The future participation depends on the outcome of the discussion on changing the legislation at national level. When it comes to SwB, we are aware of that the initiative is in place for only a limited number of years and therefore KTH is working in parallel with selected Brazilian partner universities on a bilateral basis to establish recruitment and exchange agreements.

When it comes to projects resulting in the establishment of new master's programmes, it is necessary to take into consideration that the current situation at KTH is restrictive in this sense, with the University Management stating that no new programmes should be established. This counteracts the ambition of implementing joint master's programmes in cooperation with institutions of excellence. When it comes to the involvement of the Schools in the process, the stakeholders have underlined the importance of the following aspects:

- More detailed information on the ongoing or upcoming activities in due time so to ensure an involvement from the very beginning of the process;
- Cost/Benefit Analysis (including needed resources);
- Involvement of both academic and administrative staff in the decision process.

There are very different levels of involvement at the Schools in international activities. It is necessary to balance the distribution of these activities among the Schools by being proactive in prioritizing between where there is an overflow of activities on one hand and stimulating the sleeping actors on the other. Also the communication between the University Administration and the different Schools differs a lot in terms of efficiency and in the nature of the entry point (individuals in different positions act as contact persons for the different Schools creating sometimes confusion and delays in the communication flow).

In order to counteract the lack of established routines, it is common practice to issue "President's Decisions" establishing how each activity should be carried out, according to what principles, by whom and in what time frame. The decisions are also issued when it becomes clear that a process is not owned by a specific unit/coordinator or when bottlenecks or delays show that it is not possible to proceed by consensus. A consequence of this procedure is that an excessive number of formal decisions makes it at times difficult to act as quickly as certain situations would require and also contributes to confusion and unclarity regarding what decision applies.

4 Recruitment and communication

4.1 Master students

Recruiting master students

The process on level 1, annexe 5A, gives an overall view on how KTH works with the recruitment of masters students, with the activities divided into four categories; “Raise interest/branding”, “Inform about programmes”, “Communicate with applicants”, and “Handle individual requests”. On Level 2, annexe 5B, these four categories are divided into sub-processes which are described more in detail.

4.1.1 Level 2, process 1: Raise interest/branding

4.1.1.1 Process description

The process describes activities from when a *first contact* with a prospective student is established until the student *searches for more information* about KTH’s programmes. A first contact can for instance be word of mouth, visiting KTH’s website or meeting KTH at study fairs. The purpose of the activities is to create awareness and strengthen the KTH brand. The following communication activities are carried out in parallel to each other throughout the year, with an emphasis on the recruitment period August/September to January.

Produce information, print and web: The first activity is to provide general information about what KTH offers in terms of degree programmes and student life. The information is mainly published on the website and in an annually updated Master’s brochure. The brochure contains a list of the programmes offered, short texts about application, student life, student interviews, etc. but no programme descriptions. The texts produced on the website are more detailed and updated continuously throughout the year. The Student Recruitment (KIR/SR) is the main actor here.

Provide and promote scholarships: The administration of and information about scholarships is carried out by the Admissions Office (AUA). According to evaluations and experience from fairs, etc., the availability of scholarships/tuition fee waivers is crucial for recruiting talented international students. KTH has had government funded tuition fee waivers, an internal fund (Ernst Johnson), scholarships from the Swedish Institute and a smaller number of other scholarships, in total 73 in 2013. The number of government funded scholarships has decreased and the internal fund (Ernst Johnson) can no longer be used, which makes KTH dependent on finding new means such as industry-funded scholarships. The ownership of this task is unclear and there are no significant results during the three years since tuition fees were introduced.

Promote at fairs and events: KTH participates in a number of student recruitment fairs and other events abroad (13 fairs in 2013), mainly in the prioritized regions; China, India, Southeast Asia and Brazil. A number of visits are also carried out at partner universities worldwide. These activities often involve both academic and administrative staff. The recruitment fairs are coordinated by SR, but it is mainly staff from IR/ the prioritized regions group and the Admissions Office that travel and participate at fairs. Costs like registration fees and material, are covered by SR, but costs for staff, travel and allowance are covered by the participating units. Fairs or other events at partner universities, with the main purpose of promoting exchange, are the responsibility of the International Relations (KIR/IR).

Promote via agreements with partner universities: KTH has recruitment agreements with Chinese universities. The agreements can also entail an improved chance to achieve a scholarship. Academics from KTH visit the partner universities to promote KTH and to interview applicants. Recruitment via agreements is carried out by the prioritized regions group in IR. See section 3.

Promote via on-line portals: KTH promotes its' master's programmes on external on-line portals, such as masterstudies.com, mastersportal.eu and iAgora.com, which generate traffic to kth.se and contact details to interested students (leads). Statistics show that external portals can be the first contact that prospective students have with KTH. The on-line portals accounts are handled by SR.

Promote via web, social media and blogs: The branding activities have a strong focus on digital media, which is an area mainly handled by SR. In 2013, KTH organized three student competitions in different countries together with a company specialized on student competitions, two of them were carried out together with other Swedish universities. Other on-line campaigns have focused on themes like Swedish innovations and the Nobel Prize.

In September 2013 KTH launched a Facebook page directed towards international students. Per February 2014, the page has 11 157 followers and frequent questions from students both to the inbox and open feed. The page was started by SR, who shares the responsibility of answering questions with one student counsellor at Info-Center and one staff member from International Student Office (AFS/ISO). In February SR launched the account "KTH in Sweden" on Twitter, @KTHuniversity.

Due to *The Great Firewall of China*, KTH built a Chinese website hosted in Hong Kong which contains information on KTH and the degree programmes in Chinese. Furthermore KTH is present in Chinese social media such as Weibu, Youku and RenRen.

International students are blogging about their experiences at KTH and about important happenings on and off campus. There are today seven blogs in total, five in English, one in Portuguese and one in Chinese.

As from autumn 2013, KTH started an International Ambassador programme, coordinated by SR in cooperation with one of the Schools. KTH employs nine international students who carry out various tasks such as; responding to questions from prospective students on-line, taking care of study visits on campus and undertaking visits to their home universities to give presentations about KTH. Since the page was published there have been over 350 questions from prospective students. Most of the questions concern admissions (more than 50%), scholarships, student life, accommodation, etc.

Follow up contacts/leads: Contact details/leads can be collected from on-line portals or fairs. This is a new activity that has only been implemented a few months. Communication to the leads goes via newsletters informing students about KTH, important dates and links to blogs and digital ambassadors. SR communicates with all the leads via newsletters.

4.1.1.2 Process analysis

Branding activities such as printed material, general information on the website, social media, digital campaigns and market analysis are mainly coordinated by SR, with input from other units within the University Administration and the Schools. Currently there are 3.5 FTE staff members dedicated to international student recruitment at SR. The unit has an international communication platform from 2011 and annual concept plans, both developed in cooperation with the contracted communication agency, which is also involved in most of the on-line operational activities. In addition, the group working with prioritized regions within IR has approximately 6 FTE staff members who work with student recruitment as their main focus, even though other areas are covered as well. For instance they are the main actor in fairs and events and recruitment via partner universities.

The International Strategy Group (KIR/IS), hereafter IS, is involved in coordinating overall strategic activities that often include many units, such as restructuring the website for prospective students.

The resources, competence and administrative support on School level vary significantly when it comes to recruiting international students (see annexe 2).

Schools and units within the University Administration agree that branding activities should be carried out or coordinated by the University Administration in order to create a strong and consistent brand. However, there is also a desire from some of the programmes to promote themselves to a larger extent and create their own material when needed. It is a challenge to maintain the KTH profile as one consistent brand with 60 master's programmes at ten different Schools if all the Schools print their own material. On the other hand, according to the School representatives, there is not much focus on supporting initiatives coming from the Schools and programmes. More effort could be put on simplifying for schools and programmes to get involved in recruitment, such as providing clear information on which fairs they can join, which templates to use for printed information and which activities to focus on if they want to communicate with prospective students, etc.

Some crucial activities, such as providing externally funded scholarships, lack clear ownership. From 2014 there is a shared responsibility between NLS, IS and IR (prioritized regions). There is no common strategy or objective regulating this activity.

There is no tailored computer support system available for recruitment and communication. A CRM-system has been discussed, mainly for administration of contacts/leads, such as prospective students from fairs, events and external portals. Today KTH uses a newsletter system called Apsis, which can only be used to send newsletters.

To communicate internally, the intranet is used and news are reported in the internal international newsletter coordinated by IS. Most of the communication however, goes via e-mail between the University Administration and for instance programme directors.

Various kinds of groups meet to inform each other or to coordinate efforts, such as

- The "Master network" with administrative representatives from involved units within the University Administration and each School (Master Coordinators).
- Reference group for international student recruitment with representatives from involved units within the University Administration and from some Schools (Recruitment Officers/communicators/academics).
- Network of involved functions from IR, SR, IS and ISO meet once a month to plan and inform about activities.
- Reference group for web information to prospective students.
- Network to coordinate activities to prospective students, consisting of representatives from SR, IR/prioritized regions, NLS/Alumni.

These groups are run through individual initiatives on a "need-to-know" basis, often without the involvement of the Heads of represented units and without any clear mission or mandate.

The student survey and focus group discussion with master's students show that students gained a first awareness of KTH and the master's programmes through different channels, often quite coincidental via google search, ranking lists, recommendations from friends/teachers, on-line portals, etc. The first contact was followed up by a search for detailed information, primarily on kth.se but also via ranking lists and advice within the student's personal or professional network. It is evident that ranking lists play an important role in branding.

The survey also shows that the students are overall very positive towards the KTH website. Detailed information about programme structure and courses was crucial. The areas where improvement was requested were: more

detailed information about *accommodation*, more information on *scholarships* and how they are distributed. They also found it hard to find relevant information about *PhD studies and related research* and wanted researchers to update their profiles. See annexes 5E:1, 5E:2.

4.1.2 Level 2, process 2: Inform about programmes

4.1.2.1 Process description

The decision on what programmes to be offered the following year is taken by the President, this is taken prior to the University Board meeting in June when the number of places for each programme type is decided. However, in terms of the recruitment process, which is wholly dependent of the Presidents' decision, the timeframes do not correlate.

Initiate overview of programme descriptions: Programme descriptions are rather short texts about the programmes developed for recruitment purposes and adapted to the target group. SR initiates updates of all programme descriptions by communicating dates and templates for the texts to all Schools/programme directors in May.

Update texts on programmes: The Schools update the content in the programme descriptions in June. SR edits the texts, via an external copywriter and/or translator in June-August.

Publish programme syllabus and courses in database/Kopps: Documents in terms of programme syllabus (including details regarding course structure and admission requirements) and course descriptions are updated and approved by the Schools and published in the database "Kopps" by October. These documents are to be available to prospective students, by the opening of the application process, but many programme syllabises are incomplete or show poor quality.

Publish programme descriptions and admission requirements: Once the programme descriptions are edited, they are published on the website by SR during September/October, with links to course descriptions. The Admissions Office is responsible for publishing information on eligibility and admission.

Open programmes for applications on universityadmissions.se: The KTH programmes are published in October on universityadmissions.se, with links to programme descriptions on kth.se. The Admissions Office is responsible for all administration connected to universityadmissions.se.

4.1.3 Process analysis

When it comes to information about the programmes, competence is found at School level, where programme syllabises and course descriptions are developed and approved. The problem of properly and timely updated programme syllabises for recruitment purposes can be summarized as:

- Internal deadlines for when programme information should be approved do not correlate with when the information is needed for recruitment purposes. The decision by the President on which programmes to be offered is often delayed or changes after the decision. Updated and approved information regarding programme syllabises and course descriptions is not always available when the recruitment period starts. Furthermore, the internal time plan for when programme information should be available for the coming academic year has not been adapted to recruitment purposes. This means that some information regarding programme content has not been available by the opening of the application period. The students in the focus group confirmed that detailed information about the programmes was crucial when

choosing university and programme. They compared content and structure of different programmes prior to their choice.

- The programme syllabises are developed in order to enable internal planning and decisions and do not have as the main purpose to recruit students. School representatives are not always aware that these documents are used in student recruitment and they are not adapted accordingly. It can be questioned if the programme syllabises are the appropriate source of information for prospective students, at least in their current form. The lack of coordination and quality control of programme information in the database “Kopps” result in large differences in content and language. SR, who coordinates the process, communicates with the Programme Directors, but focuses on producing market driven texts for the programme descriptions. SR is not involved in coordinating programme syllabises. The responsible function is the Programme Director, but they are faculty with very limited time dedicated to recruitment.
- The computer system Kopps is a database developed for KTH and used for uploading programme syllabises and course descriptions. According to School representatives, the system shows deficiency when it comes to user-friendliness, flexibility and interface. The framework is reported to be too rigid to appropriately describe the programmes and the format presents little possibility to format texts or post links.

As a consequence of the above mentioned problems, in 2013 it was decided not to link prospective students to information in Kopps, e.g. programme syllabises, since the material was inconsistent, showed poor quality in content and language and also was presented in a way that was hard for readers to follow. Information on programme content and links to course descriptions had to be reported and published in other ways, which was a time-consuming process. During 2014, Kopps will be developed in order to better meet the needs but it is not yet clear to what extent or how. It is also unclear which function that decides if and how this system should be developed.

4.1.4 Level 2, process 3: Communicate with applicants and admitted students

4.1.4.1 Process description

This process starts with an on-line application and ends with a registered student. During this period, the student has to decide whether he/she wants to accept the place at KTH (if admitted), if KTH is to be the final choice, given other potential offers, how to solve the financial issues, etc. It is an important period of the recruitment, where 63% of the students dropped out in 2013 (73% of those who were liable to pay fees, 29% of non-liable to pay fees). The main reason for dropping out is inability to finance the studies. However, talented students also get multiple offers and have to choose between universities. Activities in this stage of the recruitment process are crucial for the students' decisions and can be carried out relatively cost-efficiently since the target group is known and easy to contact.

Send newsletters to applicants: During the period from application to registration, KTH sends newsletters to applicants. These activities have developed during the last two years and today there are a number of newsletters in various stages of the process. Some are directed to all students, others adapted to for instance fee-paying students. The newsletters include reminders of important steps in the application period, information on KTH and Stockholm, inspirational material, contact points, etc. The activities are coordinated by IS in cooperation with the SR, ISO and the Schools. All the newsletters are sent by SR.

Send welcome package: Admitted fee-paying students and scholarship holders receive a welcome package by post, including a gift box with a student handbook, calendar, etc. The student receives the box after the notification of admission and prior to the date when the students are to accept the offer. From 2014, the welcome package will be sent to all admitted students. The welcoming package is coordinated by SR.

Call admitted students: The Schools are encouraged to call admitted students in order to establish a contact and answer questions. The calls can be carried out by students or by an administrator/faculty connected to the programme. Starting in 2012, when one School organized Call-up week, two more Schools have now joined the service. Last year, one of the Schools put together an evaluation which showed positive response to the activity (annexe 5C). The activity is coordinated by SR, IS and the involved Schools.

Communicate via website: During the entire application and admission process up until registration, the KTH website provides information both regarding the programme/courses and practical issues such as residence permit, accommodation, arrival and introduction, contact points etc.

4.1.4.2 Process analysis

The student questionnaire and student focus group showed that these students were overall very positive to the communication in this part of the process. The ones that received the welcome package were very enthusiastic. They also appreciated a printed handbook, to bring to Stockholm, read on the flight, etc.

The communication directed towards admitted students is mainly taken care of by ISO, both in terms of printed material (handbook) and information on kth.se. In this process, the Admissions Office also plays a very important role, answering queries regarding application, admission and scholarships and IS coordinates the newsletters. Once the students are admitted to a programme, the School/programme is also an important contact for the student.

The involvement on School/programme-level varies considerably due to resources/staff involved and the priority given to the task. The main contact person is normally the Programme Director, who has very limited time dedicated to this task. The division of responsibility both between units within the University Administration and between University Administration and Schools is in some cases unclear and it is a challenge to coordinate efforts.

4.1.5 Level 2, process 4: Handle individual requests

4.1.5.1 Process description

A large number of individual requests reach KTH from prospective students; via telephone, e-mail and social media. There is no main or coordinated channel; students are directed to various functions depending on the topic of the question, (annexe 5D). Today there are more than ten contact points for prospective students, in addition to contacts for the 60 programmes. These contact points are not exclusively internal KTH contacts, e.g. since the application process is coordinated nationally, Universitets- och Högskolerådet, the Swedish Council for Higher Education (hereafter UHR) and their service universityadmissions.se is also involved in requests concerning applications.

It is a common perception that many requests are sent to multiple or “incorrect” recipients. For instance, some Programme Directors are frustrated to receive a lot of questions regarding application and admission. Due to the number of different functions involved, it is hard for students to know which function to contact. In addition, students often pose different kinds of questions and it is unlikely that they divide them into numerous messages directed to different functions.

4.1.5.2 Process analysis

The Facebook page for international students launched in autumn 2013 is an important contribution when handling requests. SR is responsible for the page and the postings. The questions however, are dealt with mainly by the Info-Center and ISO. As of today, most of the questions concern admission. The Admissions Office has

chosen not to be involved due to lack of resources, so students are directed to their contact form, undermining the ambition of an open and efficient forum.

Since there is no main or coordinated channel for requests, it is hard to get a picture of the scope, response-time and service-level of the activities. There is also a risk that students may get incorrect and/or inconsistent information. In spite of the concerns above from staff involved in the process, students in the focus group had experienced very good service when contacting KTH, with quick and accurate response.

4.2 Cost

The estimation of costs is focused on activities carried out by SR. In addition, the group prioritized regions has a large budget for recruitment, with a total budget of approximately SEK 11 million including staff costs, where approximately 60% is allocated towards student recruitment. Other units within the University Administration such as ISO, the Admissions Office and IR are also involved, but costs have not been estimated for these. Neither are costs on School level available.

The total cost, excl. staff, for international recruitment carried out by SR in 2013 was approximately 4.7 million SEK. Out of these, 3.6 million SEK went to the communication agency. The rest included print, freight, travel, external portals, competitions, etc. Staff costs at SR equalled 3,5 FTE.

4.3 Exchange students

Current situation and focus

The recruitment of exchange students is governed by the University Board decision in June 2012 stating that the design of the student exchange programme is to be directed towards achieving a balance in incoming and outgoing students, see section 2. The number of incoming exchange students should be reduced, while measures should be taken to increase the number of outgoing students. Given this background, KTH does not carry out activities with the purpose of recruiting more exchange students in general. The focus is on securing good relations with prioritized universities and promoting KTH to the ones that we would like to increase the numbers with in order to meet demands from our students, for instance with universities in the UK and the US. These measures involve university visits, cooperation in various projects and ensuring a rewarding learning experience for the incoming students – factors that do not necessarily fall into the definition of recruitment.

KTH must secure high quality and efficient communication with incoming students in order to maintain a strong brand name and relations with partners. The main part of this communication is carried out by the Schools and can be seen as administrative or academic procedures (admission, inform about available courses, discuss individual study plans, provide and inform about housing, etc.)

To conclude, the strive towards securing a relevant number of talented incoming exchange students to KTH is to a large extent influenced by other factors than recruitment or communication, not least internal decisions and operating instructions. Nevertheless, a strong brand name, word of mouth of previous exchange students and efficient communication play an important role when securing cooperation with attractive partner universities.

4.3.1 Process descriptions

Level 1, Recruit exchange students

The process starts with a first contact between student/partner university and KTH. KTH and the partner university then agree on number of students to include in the exchange; which is normally regulated in an exchange agreement. This activity is described separately (section 2). The process continues with activities *to*

“Raise interest/branding”, “Inform about offer for exchange students” and “Communicate with applicants and admitted students”. The process ends with a registered student.

Compared to the corresponding process for master’s students, the recruitment of exchange students is given less focus internally and includes much less activities and a significantly smaller budget. In numbers however, the inflow of incoming exchange students is larger (1058 in 2013) than the international master’s students (705 in 2013).

The organization is experienced in handling a large number of incoming exchange students, even though the routines and priorities vary between the Schools. A lot of coordination is needed between Schools and between Schools and the University Administration. In these processes, we choose to focus solely on the areas that one or more of the stakeholders have pointed out as problematic or where there is room for improvement.

Level 2, Process 2: Raise interest/branding

The process starts when KTH and the partner university have agreed on number of exchange students and continues with the activities *“Provide general information, web and brochure”, “meet partners/visit fairs” and “student ambassadors”*. The process ends with a student who wants to apply.

Provide general information, web and brochure: IR produces a brochure with brief information for prospective exchange students, which is updated annually. More detailed information and inspiration in terms of interviews, etc. is published on the website.

Fairs and visits: KTH carries out a large number of visits to partner universities, fairs and other events abroad in order to establish contacts for exchange. Given that each international coordinator undertakes 2-4 trips per academic year (14 coordinators) and a large number of academics and staff within the KTH administration also visit partners and other events to discuss exchange, the total number of trips can be estimated to somewhere between 60 and 100 annually. There is not much university-wide coordination or evaluation of these activities. The organization could benefit from:

- Coordination; ensure that attractive partners and events are covered and that not too much of the resources are put on the same activity.
- Planning and priority; which countries and universities must be covered? Which ones are not prioritized?
- Evaluation of all visits and fairs as a base for future decision-making.
- Updated regulations for fairs; which material to bring, how to present KTH, etc.

Student ambassadors: As of today, the outgoing students are informed at a preparatory seminar about their role as an ambassador of KTH and given a USB-stick with a KTH presentation. Outgoing and returning exchange students can be used to a larger extent to promote KTH at partner universities. More effort could be put on students going to one of the prioritized partner universities (“outgoing” or “returning”), for instance by selecting and educating individuals from this group as student ambassadors.

Process 3: Inform about offer for exchange students

The process starts with a student searching for information about exchange studies at KTH. The activities can be divided into *“publish information on programmes and courses”, “provide information about studies, application and student life”*. The process ends when a student applies.

The internal time plan for when information is available regarding courses and schedule for the coming semester (in databases “Kopps” or “TimeEdit”), is not adapted to when the exchange students need the information. Exchange students choose courses relatively freely, provided that they meet the prerequisites and the majority of courses belong to the School they apply to. However, many of them have to revise their course selection when course descriptions and schedule for the coming semester are released. This can cause confusion for the student and a lot of extra work for the Schools.

Process 4: Communicate with applicants and admitted students

This process starts when a student applies to KTH. The activities carried out are “*produce handbook*”, “*send acceptance letter/welcome package*”, “*discuss individual study plans*” and “*communicate via web*”. The process ends with a registered student.

The main part of the communication to applicants and admitted students is carried out by the Schools/international coordinators. ISO is responsible for information regarding practical issues such as accommodation, residence permit, arrival and introduction, etc. The information regarding practical issues needs to be adapted to each target group (exchange vs. masters, etc.), for instance checklists for admitted students and information upon arrival. Today, exchange students meet some information that mainly concerns master students, on the website but also during the introduction period.

Acceptance letters/welcome packages to admitted students are sent by the Schools. Incoming students from a partner university can receive very different welcome packages at different times, depending on which KTH School they have applied to. KTH could benefit from coordinating these activities both when it comes to time plan and content, in order to avoid confusion among the students and to improve quality of the package.

Individual discussions concerning selection of courses and study plans for each student are very time consuming. The communication is based on e-mail conversations and attached Learning Agreements that must be updated and signed. There is currently no supporting computer system.

Since the information in Kopps is not adapted to the time frame for exchange students, most students revise their initial Learning Agreements/study plans one or several times before they are registered, which causes extra work for the student as well as the School. In 2014, a new computer system will be implemented to administer applications, course selections and study plans, which is expected to make the process more efficient and secure. Detailed information on how to select courses is produced in spring 2014, adapted to the procedures in the new system.

4.4 Student questionnaire

A questionnaire regarding communication during the recruitment period was answered by 30 current exchange students at KTH in January 2014 (annexe 5F). The respondents marked their opinion on a four-graded scale from very useful to not useful. The results stated that the students were generally content with the information material, especially on kth.se (53 % very useful, 43 % useful). There is room for improvement in the information on courses and course selection, which was considered very useful for 30 %, useful for 57 %. Approximately half of the students had met a KTH-representative prior to departure. Out of those meetings, the ones with a KTH student or alumni were most appreciated (60 % very useful, 30 % useful), compared to study fairs or other meetings at home university. 29 out of 30 had communicated with their international coordinator prior to departure. The majority (60 %) found it very useful and 33 % useful.

4.5 Analysis

The main part of the administration and recruitment of exchange students is carried out at School level, such as admission and registration of students, study plans and selection of courses. International coordinators at the Schools are the exchange students' main contact persons.

IR coordinates the activities, for instance concerning system support, central exchange agreements, project applications and administration (e.g. Erasmus), information on web and in print. The information and recruitment material is developed by IR, with input from School coordinators. Once the students are admitted, they are also contacted by ISO, responsible for the introduction activities and questions regarding practical/civic issues and accommodation.

There is no common strategy or official decision-making organ to coordinate or prioritize activities. The organisation demands a lot of coordination both between Schools and between Schools and units within the University Administration and therefore a number of informal groups have been formed:

- The School coordinators have an “international network” that meets regularly.
- School coordinators, IR and ISO meet in the “international group” approximately once a month.
- There is a reference group for international student recruitment with representatives from the University Administration and from some Schools (Recruitment Officers/communicators/academics).
- Network of involved functions from IR, SR, IS and ISO meet once a month to plan and inform about activities.
- There is a reference group for web information to prospective students.

In some cases the division of responsibility is unclear. Even though most questions can be solved within the groups above, there is a risk of overlapping or lack of information to students. The coordination between all involved units can also be inefficient and time-consuming. The organization could benefit from common strategies and priorities, for instance when it comes to planning and evaluating fairs, university visits and other events, to make sure that the right priorities are made. Acceptance letters and welcome packages could also be coordinated so that incoming students get similar information approximately at the same time.

5 Study administration

5.1 Admissions

5.1.1 Process description

The process through which international students are admitted to KTH varies depending on how they are recruited. It is possible to distinguish between three main varieties of admission of international students; admission to Master's programmes taught in English, to joint Master's programmes and to exchange studies. This section will include an in-depth description of these three modes of admission, partly because they include the largest groups of applicants and admitted students, but also because other kinds of admission processes are, to different extents, based on these models.

According to Swedish legislation, admission to higher education demands an open application for anyone wishing to take part in the education offered, and anyone applying also owns the right of being assessed as an applicant equal to all others. In light of this it is complex to describe the administration surrounding international students, since these admissions processes include applicants with varying nationalities and educational backgrounds.

KTH Master's Programmes and Joint Master's Programmes

KTH offers approximately 50 programmes taught in English, aimed at recruiting international students as well as Swedish students. These programmes are also offered as part of the five-year integrated Master's programmes, generally leading to a degree of Master of Science in Engineering (Civilingenjör). Moreover, KTH coordinates admission to twelve joint Master's programmes, five within Erasmus Mundus and seven within EIT ICT Labs (of which KTH are part of five). The timelines for these admissions processes differ, but both processes are defined and run by the Admissions Office (AUA). Admission on part of European programme consortia within Erasmus Mundus and EIT ICT Labs is based on the model of regular admission to Master's programmes, but involves more people at other universities and a number of different administrative steps to ensure that all needs of the partner universities in the consortia are being met. This section will use admission to EIT ICT Labs to exemplify the workings of admission to joint programmes. Applications are handled through a nationally shared admissions system owned and run by UHR. Students apply on a web site connected to the admissions system, which is called universityadmissions.se.

Special ventures/Student recruitment projects

Examples of special ventures that aim at the recruitment of international students are to be found in Section 3. The application and admission procedures connected to these initiatives often need to be handled manually and separately from the regular admissions process, due to deviating timelines and requirements. Efforts are made to handle these applications equally to other applications, at the same time respecting the differences in eligibility and documentation requirements stipulated in the agreements. The ambition is to avoid unnecessary and time consuming administration involved in manual handling, but also to increase the transparency and legal certainty for applicants.

5.1.2 Process analysis

KTH Master's programmes

The Admissions Office coordinates the admissions process for the Master's programmes taught in English at KTH. Detailed process description in annexe 6A. This includes being in charge of the assessment of eligibility requirements and making the final decision on admission, as well as communicating this to all students through system generated notifications of selection results. The assessment of eligibility is divided into several steps. While the Admissions Office is in charge of evaluating that the general admission requirements as well as requirements of English language proficiency are met, a second step of the eligibility check is handled at the programme level at each School at KTH. The Programme Directors are responsible for evaluating whether the applicants fulfil the specific admission requirements and, in case the number of eligible students outnumber the study places for the programme, also to rank the eligible students according to a number of pre-established selection criteria.

The evaluation of general eligibility of all applicants is carried out within a joint organisation coordinated by UHR. The organisation consists of admissions officers from universities and university colleges all over Sweden and the organisation is divided into groups based on expert knowledge of the education in a specific geographic region. This organisation assesses the general eligibility for advanced level studies and the English proficiency of applicants and registers the results of both points of assessment in the admissions system.

The general requirements for admission are formally established in the KTH local regulation on admission¹ in accordance with the Higher Education Ordinance. The local regulation also stipulates the list of criteria that can be used for ranking eligible students. The specific requirements for each educational programme are established in an officially adopted document "Study Programme for Master's programme YY" that defines the contents of the

¹ Antagningsordningen

educational programme. This is also the document in which it is specified which of the selection criteria are used in the ranking of eligible students. Both KTH documents are revised and adopted annually. In cases of admission outside of the regular admission process a formal decision on part of the Vice-Dean of Faculty is required.

The admissions system (NyA) and its web interface are nationally coordinated and the Admissions Office is responsible for running the system at KTH as well as adapting its functionality for KTH purposes, they are also responsible for supporting all users of the NyA system at KTH.

All School staff involved in the admissions process access applications and documents through the web interface of NyA. Attending a preparatory seminar is compulsory in order to be given access to the system, and in that way the Admissions Office controls which of the users at KTH are allowed to make decisions on eligibility in the system. Once the assessment work starts, information on progress, timeline changes, system updates etc. is continuously communicated to all users mostly via e-mail. This information is also sent to the Head of Educational Administration/Office (UA) at each School to ensure that the information reaches all parties affected by it. This is at times a precarious way of spreading information, since it is difficult to ascertain that all those involved get the information in time.

Joint Master's programmes

The admissions process to joint programmes is very much similar to that of KTH Master's programmes when it comes to the arrangement of eligibility assessment and decision making. Detailed process description in annexe 6B. The evaluation of specific requirements and ranking are dealt with by a selection committee appointed for each programme. The requirements are settled in the consortia agreements and the decision on admission is made by the Admissions Office and, in our example, the Master School Office of EIT ICT Labs (MSO) in cooperation with the selection committees. The process and requirements are also to be found in the KTH local regulation on admission. EIT ICT Labs have set goals (Key Performance Index) as to how many applicants and admitted students they should have each year. These goals have a direct effect on the work of the MSO and of the officer coordinating admissions.

One major difference in the arrangement of the process is that this is a local admission round, meaning that it is launched exclusively for KTH programmes. In local admission rounds the systems support, including a set of administrative services, is offered by UHR, but other than that no support by the national organisation for evaluation is available. This means that the staff at the Admissions Office has to take care of assessing the general eligibility for all applications before they can move on to assessment at the programme level.

One of the admissions officers at the Admissions Office works for MSO. Admissions Office and MSO coordinate the process and serve together as a hub between the various Programme Directors and the partner universities involved. The administrative routines connected to application and admissions have been documented by MSO for the benefit of all programme consortia involved. These routines are fashioned with respect to the divergent requests and demands of the partner universities, due to differences in legislation, administration and preferences when it comes to admission.

Applications are made in two steps. The first is done on the EIT ICT Labs web portal, which allows applicants to upload their application documents simultaneously. The second step is to make an application on the Swedish national site, universityadmissions.se. The admissions process is thus handled in two separate systems, where the Admissions Office works in NyA and the selection committees work in the web portal of EIT ICT Labs. This means that the coordinating officer in charge of the process at the Admissions Office has to transfer documents and data back and forth between the systems throughout the process to enable all those involved to work as planned. The coordinating officer communicates information to all participants via e-mail and at regular meetings, but

information is also shared on the web portal of EIT ICT Labs. Notifications of the results of the selection are communicated to applicants via the systems and letters of admission are also sent in hard copy. In connection to this admissions process a new admissions process to the EIT ICT Labs programmes is set off. During this second process, application and admission is handled on a local partner university level, but both the MSO and the Admissions Office have a coordinating role even here. As it is very difficult to investigate the procedures leading to admission during the second round, this will not be dealt with any further here.

Exchange students

Admission of incoming exchange students to KTH is carried out almost entirely at the School level. Exchange students make an online application to KTH after having been approved for exchange studies by their home university. The system in which this takes place is run by AUA and a central coordinator at IR is part of preparing the system for the opening of the application. An internal KTH policy on admission of incoming exchange students has been adopted, which specifies which requirements, the Schools need to adhere to, e.g. sending the letters of acceptance and supplying students with relevant information. Another obligation of the Schools entails admitting the students in the system. However, no formal assessment of eligibility is done, as it is regulated in the exchange agreements that it is the responsibility of the sending institution to guarantee that nominated students fulfil the requirements for admission. The official decision on admission is made by the Director of first and second cycle education (GA) at each School. The process leading to the decision of admission is not established in the policy. This makes the process of admitting incoming exchange students susceptible to differences, which in turn leads to a situation where students may experience KTH differently, depending on which School they come into contact with. One example of this is that the admission letters are sent at different points in time from the Schools. All Schools have at least one member of administrative staff, an international coordinator, in charge of administrative routines for this group of students. As seen in annexe 6C, the coordinator is involved in most of the administrative steps preceding admission. AUA is involved in the process only to create temporary registration numbers in the study administration system. This has presented itself as a problem, since AUA is not always updated on the timeline of the process and this result in the process being held up. A handbook for the administration of exchange students has been created by the international coordinators but is not an officially adopted document at KTH.

At present there is a discussion on how admission of exchange students should be carried out in order to achieve a more efficient, correct and harmonized process. An initiative to outline and document the process of admission has been undertaken in a project involving representatives from the University Administration as well as from the School level. This project also includes admission of students within Dual Master's and Double Diploma agreements.

5.1.3 Costs

Costs and staff resources for the admission of international students are approximated to 2,5-3 million SEK for systems support and 9,5 FTE.

5.2 Allocation of scholarships

5.2.1 Process description

Described below are two established scholarship processes with large student flows; the government funded scholarships² initiated by the Swedish Government in connection with the introduction of tuition fees in 2011,

² Förordning (2010:718) om stipendier för studieavgiftsskyldiga studenter

process description annexe 6D, and the Erasmus Mundus Master's Course scholarships³, process description annexe 6E.

Tuition fee waivers

The allocation of government funded scholarships, or *tuition fee waivers* as no money is paid out to the student, are based on academic excellence. The tuition fee waivers, hereafter fee waivers, cover the whole tuition fee and prospective students apply in parallel to a master's programme but in a different system; Webforum, a system administered by KTH. The Admissions Officer with the responsibility to coordinate scholarships and fees, hereafter Admissions Officer, based in the Admissions Office in the Academic Registry (AUA) matches the scholarship application with the information in NyA to ensure that the applicant has submitted a complete application, paid the application fee and applied to KTH as first priority. Lists of applicants are then sent to the Head of Educational Administration/Office (UA) at each School who in turn distributes these to the concerned Programme Directors. The involvement of UA is a recently implemented step to further strengthen and establish the process.

Assessment and nomination is conducted by the Programme Directors by accessing the applicants' documentation in NyA, the assessment is undertaken in parallel with the admissions process. Eligible applicants are thereafter ranked and given a merit rating, a short motivation on why an applicant should be nominated is then written. The lists are collated and consolidated by UA who returns them to the Admissions Officer.

A final eligibility check is then carried out. A joint assessment is conducted by the academics in the steering committee. The steering committee is officially appointed by the academic management and consists of academic representatives from the four Schools with the largest number of applicants to a master's programme together with a representative from AUA and the Senior Advisor for International strategies.⁴ The group is convened by the Admissions Officer.

The academic representatives make the joint assessment based on the programme directors merit rating and a set of common criteria; Grade Point Average or equivalent, home university and motivation from the programme director. In the event of equal merits, applicants from the prioritized regions take precedence. The common criteria used by the steering committee are decided within the group, no Rectors' decision or similar regarding the specific criteria is taken.

The process has been laid out in such a way as to ensure that academic decisions are carried out by academic representatives and to ensure an established process. This will in turn certify, to the extent possible, that applicants who are nominated and those receiving a fee waiver are of a high academic quality. The number of available fee waivers is based on calculations made by the Planning and Evaluation Office; since the amount will change from year to year the number of scholarships will inevitably vary. The final decision is taken by the KTH President, represented here by the Deputy President, Vice-Dean of Faculty, Vice-President for International Affairs and the Senior Advisor International Strategies.

All applicants are notified of the outcome a few weeks prior to the publication of the Notification of Selection results and those nominated are required to reply to the offer within a given deadline. The offer of a scholarship is expected to have reached all nominees by the publication of the first selection results. Declines are managed by the Admissions Officer and nominees on the waiting list are thenceforth contacted. In the event that the scholarship is offered after the publication of the first selection results, the student may already have received an

³ <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu>

⁴ Tillsättning av styrgrupp för stipendietilldelning av regeringsstipendium samt stipendium ur Stiftelsen Ingenjör Ernst Johnson fond, UF-2012-0861

invoice which will then be cancelled. A formal decision regarding the allocation is prepared and expedited by the Admissions Officer. The process is controlled by a strict time schedule which is very much dependent on the admission process.

Erasmus Mundus Master's Course scholarships

The Erasmus Mundus Master's Course (EMMC) scholarship process differs from the tuition fee waivers in the sense that the coordinating university and programme consortium are expected to follow the rules and guidelines set by the EACEA with regard to selection, management and deadlines. It is also managed from a different office, International Relations (KIR/IR), where the programmes are divided between two Erasmus Mundus Officers, hereafter EM Officers. KTH currently coordinates five EMMC's.

All applicants applying for an EMMC programme in NyA are automatically considered for a scholarship and the process runs in parallel with the EMMC admissions process managed by AUA. Most questions from applicants are consequently handled by AUA whereas communication with partner universities in the consortia and the EACEA is managed by IR. The two processes are closely intertwined. The assessment is performed in accordance with a set of joint selection criteria agreed among the consortium partners and the selection and ranking takes place during a selection meeting. The selection results in a ranking list with selected applicants, a waiting list and a list with non-selected applicants; the information is entered in the Erasmus Mobility Tool (EMT) by the EM Officer. Documentation is prepared by the EM Officer and sent to the EACEA after the selection meeting in order for them to approve the lists. The official scholarship confirmation will only be given after the EACEA has given their approval and notified the consortium, usually around the third week of April. Applicants are however notified in advance of the EACEA confirmation in order for them to have time to start necessary preparations such as applying for residence permits etc. A number of administrative steps take place throughout the process in order to comply with EACEA regulations.

5.2.2 Process analysis

Tuition fee waivers

A President's decision outlining the allocation process and its principles on a more overall level has been taken but it does not indicate who has the main overall responsibility for the process or describe a step by step procedure.⁵ The result is that no function has been assigned the official role of the process owner, i.e. someone who has the mandate to make decisions that will influence the process as a whole. A number of functions have an interest in the process and its outcome and there are several decision-makers involved; representing both academic and administrative management. The Admissions Officer operates the process and holds ownership of the MS Excel file used but the function has no mandate to make actual decisions.

The process is continuously improved in order to streamline and ensure a quality assured procedure; changes have therefore been implemented accordingly, both in the actual step-by-step process but also in terms of the allocation principles. An observation made is that changes have on occasion been implemented at a late stage and the full process is not always evaluated before a new change is instigated.

E-mail is used as the main channel of communication internally and transfer of information between Schools and the University Administration appear to run satisfactorily. Since the involvement of UA is a new part of the process its impact on information flow, time schedule etc. is yet to be evaluated. The intranet is also used to some extent but it is difficult to gauge how frequently it is used, for what purpose and by whom. Admissions Officers also inform all staff attending the NyA preparatory seminars. Information for applicants is published on the

⁵ Beslut om fördelningsprocessen av KTHs statsstipendier samt privata stiftelsemedel, UF-2012-0868

external KTH website but a gap between the transparency of the allocation principles and the information aimed towards the applicants has been identified through interviews with students.⁶ The lack of transparency have led to misconceptions among the group which can have a negative effect on the status of tuition fee waivers and they may, as a result, become less attractive.

Erasmus Mundus Master's Course scholarships

To clarify the routines a document has been produced internally which summarizes the EACEA guidelines and outlines the division of responsibility between IR, AUA and the Programme Directors. However, a need for greater clarity in terms of responsibility has been expressed as the process is highly dependent on the different functions involved and that all parties understand their role and responsibility, especially as it is interlinked with the EMMC admissions process and must adhere to strict external deadlines.

The process has been developed by the operative EM Officers and they are in control of and are responsible for the majority of the procedures, although the overall responsibility is rather unclear. As external regulations apply the central administrative and academic management appear not to have the same level of involvement as in the process connected with the fee waivers. KTH acts as the coordinator for the entire consortium and there is a delicate balance between the service required to fulfil the rules and regulations of the EACEA and the needs of the consortium, together with what should be delivered to the student and the allocation of internal resources within the department/unit.

5.2.3 Cost and reflections

A common feature for the two processes is that they are characterised by a great deal of competence and knowledge but also vulnerability as both are highly dependent on individual members of administrative staff in the University Administration. It has also been noted that the EM Officers and the Admissions Officer have control down to an individual-based level for each cohort.

It is estimated that the time one EM Officer dedicates during the period January-May, i.e. the most work intensive period in term of the scholarship process, is equivalent to 0,4 FTE. It should be noted that the EM Officers work with all aspects of the EMMCs throughout the year and it can therefore be difficult to isolate the scholarship process as it is closely interlinked with all aspects of the EMMC administration during this period. AUA has allocated 1 FTE who has been specifically assigned to coordinate scholarships and fees.

5.3 Invoicing and payment of tuition fees

5.3.1 Process description

The process described below is in relation to the first tuition fee instalment in the international master's admission round i.e. master's programmes taught in English at KTH, detailed process description in annexe 6F. It should however be noted that students liable to pay tuition fees can be found in all admission rounds. This process is therefore not exclusive to the master's admission round.

The invoice and payment process is a centralised process coordinated by an Admissions Officer with the area of responsibility to coordinate scholarships and fees, hereafter Admissions Officer, based in the Admissions Office in the Academic Registry (AUA).

Once the second notification of selection results has been published a list of admitted students is extracted from the admission system, NyA. A file in MS Office Excel is created by the Admissions Officer containing data

⁶ <http://www.kth.se/en/studies/master/kth/fees-scholarships/scholarships/tuition-fee-waivers>

regarding all admitted students liable to pay tuition fees.⁷ As the list contains both students liable to pay tuition fees and scholarship holders, the latter category is marked to prevent an invoice being sent. The scholarship process is a parallel process coordinated by the same function. Different files are created for different admission rounds and these files are used as the main source for information throughout the process and thereafter. Once the list is ready the information is transferred to the finance system, Agresso, where the invoices are prepared. Before the invoices are sent, an email with payment instructions is sent. Payments can be done via credit card or bank transfer. It is not uncommon for a students' status to change during this period and the invoice is then manually cancelled and a change of status is recorded.

An email reminder is sent in the event that a payment has not been received after the last payment date. In previous years, students were not allowed a late payment and as a consequence lost his/her study place. However, experience has shown that students may need extra time to gather funds for the first instalment so the deadline is not strictly adhered to. Payments are received and managed in Agresso and registered in the correct Excel file. The payment is also registered in the students' profile in the academic registry system Ladok as information regarding payment is continuously transferred automatically from Ladok to the Swedish Migration Board, in order to enable the student to be granted a residence permit.

The tuition fee can be fully reimbursed if the student is denied a residence permit or in the occurrence of other mitigating circumstances beyond the student's control, e.g. serious illness. An application for reimbursement must then be submitted. The final decision is taken by the Chief Administrative Officer after documentation has been prepared by the Admissions Officer and approved by the Senior Advisor for International Strategies.

A similar process is adopted for the continuous invoicing of semester 2, 3 and 4.

5.3.2 Process analysis

The process is characterised by a clear division of responsibility and a close and effective cooperation between the functions involved where the Admissions Officer operates and manages the process for AUA, while the Financial Officer manages the invoicing and payment procedure on behalf of the Finance Office. While the Admissions Officer operates the process and owns the Excel files, it is unclear who has been assigned the main ownership, i.e. the responsibility and mandate for the process as a whole and who, as a result, holds a comprehensive view with a focus on both internal and external stakeholders. The process is very dependent on the knowledge of individual members of administrative staff which are not necessarily connected to a particular function and there is vulnerability in this dependency. While the cooperation within the process itself functions well, on a managerial level the process is, in some cases, not always seen as a routine procedure or considered to fit with already established procedures.

This is a relatively new process and adjustments are regularly being made to improve and strengthen the procedures and remove unnecessary steps. Since the functions involved have actively worked with mapping the different activities and developing the process, a greater knowledge and understanding for the process and the different internal needs has been achieved, this has also led to improved information flows and greater efficiency. There is however lack in communication towards the final steps in the process when information is transferred to other units within the University Administration and the Schools as it is not always clear what kind of information is needed and when.

⁷ Students with citizenship in countries outside the EU/EEA or Switzerland are required to also pay an application fee in order for their application to be processed. The administration surrounding the application fee has however been outsourced to the Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR).

Incoming questions concerning payment procedures, requests to postpone payment, changes in status etc. are mainly handled by the Admissions Officer, Financial Officer and the International Study Advisor as appropriate. As requests and questions come in via different contact routes, to different functions and departments at School level and at the University Administration, there is often a need to redirect students to ensure that the question is answered by the appropriate function.

Questions and requests arising out the process can also be of such character that they require a decision to be taken. These types of queries are often forwarded to the Senior Advisor for International strategies who makes a decision on behalf of the Chief Administrative Officer as no formal delegation of authority exists.

An internal terms of reference document is seen as a useful tool in relation to questions and requests which may arise, both of internal and external character.⁸ It is considered a living document and modifications are being made as more knowledge and information is gathered. However, it is unclear which department and function holds the responsibility for updating this document. It is currently being done by the Admissions Officer but it has not been established who initiates this task, how frequently it should be updated, when it should be completed and by whom. The current document published on the KTH intranet is from 2011.

As mentioned, the Excel file is owned by the Admissions Officer but also shared with the Financial Officer and International Study Advisor in the International Student Office (AFS/ISO) who also work actively in the file. A limited number of other functions at the University Administration have access but are not allowed to edit or save the file. The number of functions has been kept to a minimum and is regularly revised. Routine descriptions have been developed by the functions involved for the use of the file and its different columns and improvements are still being undertaken as work progresses. The functionality of Excel meets the purpose and current needs. It is used as the main tool in terms of administration and follow-up throughout the students' time at KTH and as a support to Ladok. It is the only document where a complete picture of a students' profile can be viewed, no other system fulfils this particular purpose at this current stage.

The finance system Agresso is owned and managed by the Finance Office. The system has not been developed further to facilitate the invoicing of fee-paying students and limitations have been identified as some functions appear to not completely meet current needs of the student. For example, it is not possible to send an automated confirmation or a receipt to the student once a payment has been received. The receipts are created manually to adhere to certain regulations and sent via email upon request. A decision that a confirmation or a receipt must be sent to all students once a payment has been received has not been taken. No automatic transfers occur between Ladok and Agresso which results in additional steps where data must be entered manually in Agresso. Certain other functions have been developed to facilitate a smoother payment process for the student such as enabling payment with a credit card. The system, pay.kth.se, has also been beneficial to the management of the rental payments for student housing where the majority of payment flows can now be found.

It is not the mass flow of students within the process that cause complications as the process is well functioning with clear guidelines which have been communicated to the different functions involved. It is rather the exceptions which lie outside of this routine which cause the most difficulties, additional manual steps and ad hoc solutions.

5.3.3 Costs

No additional costs in relation to system support have been identified. The introduction of tuition fees has however had an impact on resources in terms of personnel as this procedure requires a different administration,

⁸ Reviderade riktlinjer avseende hantering av studieavgift betald av avgiftsskyldig student för utbildningsprogram och kurser vid KTH, UF-2011-0751

often with additional manual steps where system support is insufficient. Approximately 0.5 FTE in the Finance Office is working solely with this particular process with current student numbers. AUA has allocated 1 FTE who has been specifically assigned to coordinate scholarships and fees. It is a periodic process and the workload may therefore vary throughout the year. However, as mentioned previously, students liable to pay tuition fees can be found in all admission rounds and the steps described to administer the invoicing and payment are therefore applicable to all admission rounds.

5.4 Semester and course administration during the time of study at KTH

5.4.1 Process description

The description of processes of study administration of international students must have its starting point in the fact that according to Swedish law no distinction should be made of students based on country of origin or citizenship. Systems and records cannot include any information on those aspects of a student's background, or any other information that could lead to discriminatory acts.

For all students, study administration involves a set of compulsory steps, i.e. semester- and course registration, applying for courses within a programme and registration for examinations. In contrast, there are a number of study administrative processes and activities that are not relevant for all students, examples of which are applications for leave of study and credit transfer, and administration with regards to non-completion and changing courses. This section of the report will focus on administration during the time of study at KTH for the international student as well as the degree administrations process and the administration connected to credit transfers.

Several of the activities mentioned above are available online for the purpose of implementing self-administration for students. The Schools choose to use the services of the centrally provided system to different extents and the administrative organisation surrounding students differs depending on which School students belong to. From a systems perspective, this situation makes it very difficult for the University Administration to provide a comprehensive systems support that meets the needs and demands of all Schools.⁹

Since the introduction of tuition fees in 2011, the study administration system has been adjusted to include aspects of tuition fee administration. The main reason for this is to make sure that students required to pay tuition fees cannot be enrolled on courses and programmes unless their payment is registered in Ladok. Once this registration is done, the student is treated equally to all others. However, this new step of administration has brought about new problems, both at School level and at the University Administration. This is partly due to the fact that Ladok treats all students the same, which means that all students in the system are systematically assessed for tuition fee status. The fact that the fee administration is concentrated to the University Administration at KTH has also resulted in an imbalance between central and School level when it comes to both workload and knowledge connected to tuition fee legislation and administration. For those students admitted outside of regular processes, this is also very frequently a phase of the process where difficulties may occur. It is therefore crucial that the staff responsible for the fee administration is involved at early stages of new recruitment initiatives. The process of reception and registration of payment is described in further detail in section 5.3.

The issue of tuition fee status should not affect a students' time of study at KTH. However, for fee paying students there is a greater need of an efficient and transparent process concerning a number of study administrative aspects that may have a direct effect on the costs for their tuition. For example, the processes of applying for leave of study or credit transfer must be well functioning and speedy.

⁹ The Administrative Assessment Exercise project *Study Administration from a Student Perspective* investigates students' experiences of study administration at KTH in light of online self-administration services.

5.4.2 Process analysis

The following segment covers an in-depth description of the compulsory stages during a semester of studies at KTH. In order to show the two models available when it comes to study administration of international students, two figures are presented. Annexe 6G and 6H describe the administrative progression of a semester for programme students and exchange students respectively and from the administrator's perspective. The primary differences found are that exchange students are only admitted to courses and are therefore not included in all programme related activities and that the end of the semester for exchange students entails a number of administrative steps which are not relevant for programme students. The process is the same for fee paying students, with the only difference that their semester or course registration must be preceded by the registration of payment in Ladok.

The School staff is responsible for carrying out the process of study related administration. The model for division of work between different administrative functions varies between Schools. The different stages of annexe 6G can be carried out by different roles at the School level, including both academic and administrative staff. When it comes to figure 6H, describing exchange students, we see that the international coordinator at each School has a prominent role in the initial and final phases of the study period of the exchange student. In addition, administering changes of courses in the Learning Agreements and in Ladok is also mostly done by the international coordinators instead of other administrative staff. However, the steps of the course administration as such do not differ from that of programme students. The overall picture given by administrative School staff, is that the administration surrounding exchange students is more labour-intensive in that it requires manual administration to a greater extent than for students within programmes. For example, this manual handling may consist of controlling that the courses in the Learning Agreements correspond to those available during the semester and that they do not exceed the amount of credits agreed upon.

Decisions on grading are taken by an appointed academic, the examiner of the course in question. The Directors of first and second cycle education (GA) at each School or in some cases the Programme Directors are ultimately responsible for decisions on promotion to the next semester, leave of study and credit transfers. Activities preceding the actual decisions are handled by administrative staff at the School.

The systems support group of the Academic Registry, placed within the University Administration (AUA/VoS) work with system development and the implementation of online services for student self-administration. Moreover, this group is responsible for running the study administration system Ladok, at KTH as well as supporting all KTH users of the system. Users are given access to Ladok after having taken a compulsory course given by VoS that covers instructions on system usage, legislation etc. Updates are spread through messages posted directly in the system and also by regular information meetings for users, initiated and hosted by VoS. In case of major changes or news in the system regarding routines for study administration, information is also communicated at the meetings for UA, held twice a month. When it comes to the development of online services for students, information is also spread through reference groups consisting of School representatives, but also through web information posted for staff on the KTH Intranet.

Information on study administration for incoming international students is available on the KTH website. Information meetings are held on both central and School level for international students during the arrival weeks in August. These meetings cover basic information having to do with rights and regulations for students and study administration.

5.4.3 Costs

No systems related costs specific to international students have been identified. There is continuous work done in the administrative systems to increase functionality to support administration of tuition fee status and payments, but it is not possible to put a distinct price on activities related to international students as a group.

Approximately six members of staff at VoS work full time with different aspects of the study administration system, Ladok, out of which three work full time as a support function to the Schools in system related issues concerning study administration.

5.5 Degree Administrations Process (including Credit Transfers)

5.5.1 Process description

One of the overall objectives in the KTH Strategic Plan for 2013-2016 is that “the proportion of students graduating will increase significantly”. The plan stipulates the goal of issuing 1750 Master’s degrees during the years 2013-2016. The Strategic Plan also aims at further developing cooperative ventures with universities abroad leading to joint, dual and double degrees.

Among international students the majority of students that come into contact with degree administration are those having studied a Master’s programme. Applying for a degree is also relevant for international students admitted to the integrated Master of Science in Engineering within the framework of Double Diploma agreements.

Annexe 6I depicts the necessary steps of the process of degree administration, which is essentially the same for all KTH. The stages of the process leading to the decision to authorise a degree application may vary between Schools in terms of how and by whom the activities are carried out.

Most of the joint Master’s programmes at KTH result in a double degree for the student. Issuing these degrees may entail a somewhat different administration, mostly in the initial phases of the process where the degree application has to be preceded by a decision on credit transfer. In recent years the matter of dual, double and joint degrees issued by KTH has become increasingly relevant. At present, KTH has entered agreements with other universities resulting in two joint degrees on second cycle, but for the most part the joint programmes lead to double or dual degrees.

For KTH this is a relatively new occurrence and a group of both administrative and academic staff has been put together to investigate the matter and to identify important focal points for KTH. Examples of challenges faced are the varying definitions of the terms dual, double and joint degrees, how to meet the legislative demands of all partner universities involved and how to design joint degree certificates according to the requirements of all parties of the agreements. One important conclusion is that it is of great relevance that the matter of degrees must take a prominent part in the discussions leading to the signing of agreements of cooperative programmes.

5.5.2 Process analysis

The application for a degree is received by the School. The first screening and the preparation of documents is handled by different categories of administrative staff, depending on which School is asked. The Degree Administrations Office, situated within the Academic Registry is responsible for the final check and then handles the issuing of the degree. The formal decision on granting an application for a degree is the responsibility of the Director of first and second cycle education (GA) or the Programme Director.

Regarding the procedure of issuing degrees for students on the joint programmes, such as Erasmus Mundus, administrative staff at both the University Administration and School level agrees that the process is the same but

that it may be more time consuming and demands a specific knowledge on the design of certain degree certificates that is not officially documented. The outline of degree certificates within for example Erasmus Mundus also requires a specific kind of credit transfer in the system, meaning that this must be known by the staff responsible for this process at School level in order to be correct in the end. The process is thus highly dependent on the explicit knowledge of individual administrative staff and it is unclear whether this knowledge is documented and transferred to colleagues and other staff involved in the process.

The application for credit transfer is received and handled entirely at the School level. When it comes to credit transfers from partner universities within joint programmes, officers at IR are often involved in helping the School or the student to gather the correct documentation in order for a transfer of credits to be possible. This activity may be time consuming and include contact with partner universities and waiting for the correct documentation to arrive at KTH. A decision on the approval of a credit transfer is taken by the Director of first and second cycle education (GA) or the Programme Director. The process is roughly established in a local KTH policy, based on the Higher Education Ordinance.

The application for a credit transfer must be made on paper and handed in to the School. A common KTH form for application of credit transfer is available on the KTH web site. Some Schools use this form, whereas others have developed their own, found to be better suited for their purposes. According to the KTH policy, the student applying must also receive a formal decision on the results, including information on the right to appeal. The Schools have chosen to interpret this differently depending on which kind of credit transfer is made. For credit transfers preceding an application for a degree within a cooperative programme, some Schools have chosen not to require a formal application, but see the decision on admission as a kind of pre-approval of credit transfer. At other Schools, administrative staff requires all students to formally apply for a credit transfer regardless.

The system used for degree administrators is the study administration system Ladok and users working in the degree administration process must take a course before given access to the degree administration functions in the system. Students apply through the Ladok online service for students, or using a paper application form. The introduction of the online service was initiated in order to provide a better service for students, to improve efficiency in administration and to decrease the number of staff involved in degree administration at School level.

Information on rules and regulations concerning degree administration as well as changes in the procedure are disseminated through monthly e-mails from the Degree Administration Office to a contact person for degree administration at each School. Information and guidelines for Ladok users and staff are available on the KTH Intranet. Information for students is found on the KTH web site, but is also communicated by for example the study guidance counsellors of the Schools.

5.5.3 Costs

No discernible systems cost can be identified for degree administration and credit transfer administration for international students.

Four members of staff work full time at the Degree Administrations Office and at the School level the number of staff involved in degree administration and credit transfers may vary. In total around 50 administrative staff at School level have been given access to the degree administrative functions in Ladok. See annexe 2 for an idea of the distribution between the Schools.

6 Student support at KTH

‘Student support’ is a wide concept at KTH, and most of the support is offered not only to specific groups, such as international students, but to all students.

At KTH, the student support is carried out by a number of functions both within and outside the formal university organization. In general, the more directly study related activities tend to be provided by the Schools. The less study related support activities on the other hand, are more commonly organized by the University Administration and bodies outside KTH¹⁰. For an overview of the different functions see annexe 7A.

Equal opportunity in the classroom

KTH’s action plan for gender equality, diversity and equal opportunity¹¹ states that KTH shall offer equal conditions for all students and employees. This is often referred to when supportive activities for students are discussed at KTH. One commonly used statement is that ‘In the classroom, there is no difference between students’, meaning that in a classroom situation, teachers rarely know what category the students belong to.

Equal opportunity outside the classroom

In some aspects students within different groups are likely to experience different needs outside the classroom, requiring support to meet those specific needs. One example can be when it comes to choosing courses. Tuition fee-paying students might need support related specifically to the tuition fee regulation; if the credits from the chosen courses sums up to more than what is paid for, it will result in KTH charging the student for the excess credits. An exchange student on the other hand might need support with choosing courses to fulfil his/her learning agreement.

In annexe 7B you will find a ‘case study’ of a few fictive students on their journey through KTH. All cases are based on real situations experienced by students or staff at KTH. This case study aims to serve as a description of the student support offered to international students at KTH and how it can differ between groups of students depending on factors such as if the student is a citizen of a country within the EU/EEA, the length and type of studies and which Schools or campuses they are studying at.

In short summary, the student support offered at KTH consists of:

- Preparatory support (for example pre-arrival, arrival, and introduction information and services),
- Academic study support (for example study counselling, contact persons at each School, support for students with disabilities, and supports to improve students’ study skills, scientific writing, or information retrieval),
- Student welfare support (for example student health services, social networking, and helpdesks for general support),
- Career services (for example career days and seminars, mentor program, and coaching).

The main student support providers

The support that is specifically organized for KTH’s international students is usually provided by the Dean’s offices at School level, and by International Student Office (AFS/ISO) in the University Administration. THS is

¹⁰ Two examples of non-KTH bodies are the student union *THS* and the Student Health Care Services *Feelgood*.

¹¹ One KTH for everyone – equal conditions for all students and employees

also one of the main providers when it comes to support specifically organized for KTH's international students, mostly within the social area.

KTH's Schools

KTH's Schools are to a great extent self-governed. The Schools' characteristics also differ due to their total number of students, number of students within certain groups, number of programmes etc. This means that it is up to each School how they choose to organize their activities, including the student support services.

For the various categories of Master's programme students there is not one defined point of contact at the School level. For certain questions these students have to turn to the Programme Director, for other questions they might have to contact a programme coordinator or a study counsellor. What is included in the description of tasks for each function differs, but a common denominator is that these functions are not working solely with international students. The study counselling at KTH's Schools is covered in more detail within the AAE project *The Study Counselling and Career Service in the education process*.¹²

The International Student Office

ISO was established in 2011 as a direct consequence of the introduction of the tuition fees. The main task is to support international students before and during their studies at KTH. Support is provided to all international students, but the support offered is not the same for all students, e.g. tuition fee-paying students¹³ are offered a cluster of additional benefits.¹⁴ At ISO there is also an international study advisor dedicated primarily to support tuition fee-paying students and an Erasmus Mundus advisor for students on Erasmus Mundus programmes.

ISO is divided in three 'meet-the-students' functions; a helpdesk for international students (International Student Desk), KTH Accommodation, and the student advisors. The capacity that is not used for these three functions is used back-office for information, project administration and management.

The student union THS

One area of student support concerns the social dimension of being a student, and at KTH it is mostly THS (centrally) and THS chapters at the Schools and programmes that organize activities within this area. The THS organization is about to change, but currently THS has a branch called THS International (THSi) that works specifically with matters regarding international students. As a student it is not mandatory to be a member of THS, but to gain access to some of THS's support activities, students need to be members. Moreover, in the past the chapters have not been very involved in the social introduction of the international students. Students have reported not being invited or having felt unwelcome to use the services and join the activities organized by the chapters during the study periods. Even if this is not the intention of the individual chapters, it may simply be an indirect consequence of the activities mainly being offered in Swedish.

Decision making

As mentioned, KTH's Schools are to a great extent self-governed and therefore make their own decisions. When it comes to ISO's organisation and support the office is dependent both on the traditional administrative organisation as well as the strategic decisions regarding internationalisation being taken in IAG and AU. Decisions

¹² AAE Project *Studie- och karriärvägledningen i utbildningsprocessen*.

¹³ Including non-EU/EEA Master's programme students, Master's programme students holding a KTH or SI scholarship, Erasmus Mundus and EIT students and Science without Borders (SwB) scholarship holders.

¹⁴ Accommodation guaranteed for up to two years, comprehensive insurance, primary health care for minor health issues, free membership at the campus sport facility, a pre-sessional course in English, and a limited number of occasional job opportunities on campus (Not applicable for tuition fee waiver recipients, Erasmus Mundus and EIT students).

that cannot easily be defined as belonging completely to either one of these structures are usually handled by the Senior Advisor for International strategies, who in turn leads the International Strategy Group that coordinates matters of internationalization with a special focus on tuition fee-paying students.

There are also decisions that are not directly related to the activities and ISO's organisation per se, but still affect ISO and the support offered. For instance, decisions regarding the volume of students coming to KTH at a certain point in time directly affect the need for accommodation, volume of printed information material, and capacity in general during the arrival, introduction, and study periods. ISO is rarely consulted when it comes to these kinds of decisions.

Also decisions regarding processes that ISO is involved in but not in charge of affect ISO's activities. One very concrete example of this is the decision to offer a pre-session course in English for tuition fee-paying students. Although a substantial amount of the administration around the course needed to be carried out by ISO, the unit was not consulted before the decision was taken. Another example that affects ISO at regular intervals is the production of KTH's promotion and recruitment material. In such processes ISO is acting as an information provider, but how and when to contribute is often controlled by the owner of each product.

Similar effects to the ones described above also occur when the situation is the opposite; other units are affected by decisions made by the ISO, such as decisions about the arrival and introduction services.

Knowledge about the students' needs and how to reach the students to meet them

To be able to offer the best student support possible, there is, from the support provider's point of view, a need for specific knowledge about each student. Often there is a lack of information about how large a specific group is, what students are a part of that group or how to reach the students with targeted information. This leads senders of information or organizers of events to rely on guesswork or to the extent possible search for information from various units at KTH. Lists of students are compiled by different functions at KTH but rarely coordinated. Added to that, the accuracy of the compiled lists might also differ since the lists might originally have been put together for other purposes. As such, investing a considerable amount of time and work is the only way of making sure that all students that need to be reached are included in the list. The conclusion here is that the situation could be helped by improved systems support.

The language barrier

Different types of support services are to a varying extent *available* to different groups of students. When it comes to international students the language barrier is an obstacle that restricts their access to parts of the student support at KTH. These students often request more interaction with everything Swedish including the Swedes themselves. Even though most of the information on KTH's website is provided both in Swedish and in English, there are also many examples of services not offered in English. E.g. many of THS' and the THS's chapters' activities, and some of the Academic Resource Centre's (ARC) activities, are offered only in Swedish. However it is important to acknowledge that both the student union and ARC are offering increasingly more activities in English and including international students as a target group alongside others. International students are not satisfied however, and are requesting more career services and express that these are not being sufficiently supplied. The resources allocated to career services equals two fulltime staff, and since these services are offered to all of KTH's students, the actual availability for each student is limited.

One factor that has not been examined in this project is to what extent KTH staff providing student support are comfortable with providing it in English, or, if there can be other factors, such as lack of knowledge regarding specific groups of students, that affects the support that the students are entitled to or could benefit from.

6.1 Costs

The distribution of staff at School level can be found in annexe 2. The number of staff at ISO corresponds to 11.8 FTE.¹⁵

Besides the ISO specific costs there are also costs related to the additional benefits offered primarily to tuition fee-paying students.¹⁶ The aggregated cost for these services is roughly 5.7 million SEK.

7 Summary of analyses and recommendation

As a result of the goals KTH has set for its internationalization and with a view to global trends such as the introduction of Erasmus+ and initiatives such as SwB, it is clear that developments will lead to an increase of the international student population, including the number of fee-paying students. As the student population grows it will become necessary to further adapt internal routines to external needs and stakeholders.

The area “International students” is governed by both internal and external regulations, not always compatible with each other, as has been described e.g. in the Section “Special ventures – European student recruitment projects for degree seeking students, Science without Borders, Recruitment agreements in China”.

The most important regulations are:

- The Law of Higher Education (Högskolelagen) and the Higher Education Ordinance (Högskoleförordningen). The Ordinance governs all things deemed necessary to guide the structure of universities and the running of education and research.
- EU directives, regulations and project guidelines regarding international cooperative ventures.
- KTH Strategic Plan 2013-2016.
- KTH internal regulation for the submission and management of EU and national educational projects.
- Local admissions regulations of KTH.
- Local degree regulations of KTH.
- KTH policy on admission of exchange students.
- Operating instructions (Verksamhetsuppdrag) – one document per School specifying goals and budget for educational and research activities for the coming calendar year, signed by the President and the Dean of the School. Numbers for exchange students, master’s students and fee-paying students are specified here.

When analysing the different sections of the self-evaluation, certain common challenges have become apparent. These are related to the large numbers of individuals, functions and groups involved in different aspects in the field “International Students”. In order to meet the various demands on the administrative support structure, working groups are established in order to plan and coordinate, often arranged through the International Strategy group but as often on individual initiatives without any mandate in the organisation. These initiatives are a result of the lack of common/official strategic documents with set priorities, which leaves some of the strategic realization to the administration. With different units within the University Administration and ten Schools involved in the operative parts, there is a lack of an administrative organ with official authority to coordinate

¹⁵ Within ISO there are formally twelve people employed, but one is working full time for the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT). Another one works part-time as a caretaker for KTH Accommodation, although formally employed by another unit at the university administration.

¹⁶ Here including non-EU/EEA Master’s students, Master’s students holding a KTH or SI scholarship, Erasmus Mundus and EIT students and Science without Borders (SwB) scholarship holders.

efforts and take decisions overriding department and School borders. In addition, without coordination and clear administrative structures, individuals in the organisation shoulder or are allocated areas of responsibility on a more personal level without back-up – a vulnerable situation. The self-evaluation also shows that decision-making processes are randomized and disparate. Initiatives come from different actors and it is not always clear through what administrative channels the initiatives should be processed, which in turn leads to confusion, unclear authority decisions and individual actions. In addition to this, it is also unclear what administrative functions are or should be involved at what levels and the allocation of responsibilities between these.

It is also apparent that there are a number of organizational structures within the organization not only within the University Administration but at School level. There is no common model for how the Schools organize themselves, when it comes to the administration of international students and the support given to this group. The division of responsibility both between units within the University Administration and between the University Administration and Schools is in some cases unclear and it is a challenge to coordinate efforts and information. Since the group of international students is not always regarded as a coherent group in terms of administration, the question of where the responsibility for the various sub-groups lies is not always apparent.

To support the statements above, a few examples are given below from the different processes described in the self-evaluation report.

In terms of recruitment, the Student Recruitment (KIR/SR) coordinates most of the activities and has the largest budget for recruiting master's students, with a strong focus on branding activities. Detailed information about programmes and direct communication with applicants is harder to coordinate and seems to get less attention and resources. For example, internal deadlines do not always correlate and system support is at times inadequate for recruitment purposes and in terms of direct communication with applicants there is no main or coordinated contact point. Recruitment to master's programmes within Erasmus Mundus and EIT are organised differently compared to recruitment to KTH Master's programmes and many activities are dealt with by the consortia/EIT KICs. Central administration is mainly carried out by International Relations (KIR/IR) but the programmes should also be included in the activities carried out by SR to ensure that information towards prospective students is streamlined and coherent.

Where exchange students are concerned, since KTH does not carry out activities to actively recruit within this group, the responsibility has been distributed between different functions with SR playing a minor role and IR coordinating the activities in cooperation with the international coordinators at the Schools. In the same manner as is the case for recruitment of master's students, internal deadlines do not correlate with when the information is needed from a students' point of view, which in turn causes extra work, and at times, confusion.

In terms of admission, it is interesting to note that it is possible to distinguish two separate and distinct kinds of admissions processes, where one is highly centralised, moulded in close connection to Swedish legislation as well as to the Lisbon Recognition Convention (i.e. KTH master programmes) and the other is decentralised, with the steps of the process outlined on School level and where decisions and administration is in accordance with agreements signed with other universities (i.e. incoming exchange students) . All students, irrespectively of which route that they are recruited and admitted through, meet in the classroom where no distinction is made.

In conclusion, the self-evaluation shows that in general, work is performed within clear departmental boundaries, with generally little focus on "crossing borders". These boundaries do not always serve the end result or process development. A greater understanding is needed amongst staff in the organisation regarding the fact that the activities a function is responsible for are part of a series of activities and therefore is both dependent on and influences the whole series. In the current situation there are people who operate and manage processes and as they answer to their closest Head of unit, the process thus becomes dependent on what degree of ownership that

unit or that Head of unit takes, what insight and understanding they have of the process as well as what communication channels are established between the function managing the process, the process owner and the Head of unit. It should be mentioned that examples have been given in this report of where processes have been actively mapped and laid out by the functions involved and this has had very positive effects on the individual process as a whole.

The self-evaluation also shows that when it is unclear who is responsible and who the process owner is, this results in uncertainty regarding who has the authority to decide on the process format. This in turn leads to difficulties in implementing change. A process owner should be defined as a function who has the overall view and knowledge with focus on the stakeholders, with the authority to make decisions and drive issues related to the process and the optimal end result for the process (not necessarily for the individual unit or department) . If the process owner holds a position as Head of a unit of a Department, he/she must be able to differentiate between the role as process owner and the functional responsibility. There is a danger that when the main focus lies on internal routines and decision paths, the needs of the different stakeholders is neglected.

For some processes, it may be desirable to review the function responsible for operating the process and what administrative unit that function belongs to in order to ensure efficiency, transparency and control. The different scholarship processes can be mentioned as an example. These differ depending on whether the scholarships are provided through Swedish state funds, through the European Commission or through EIT/KICs, and are consequently handled very differently and placed in different departments. The meetings with the stakeholders have identified areas of improvement, misunderstandings of policies, lack of clarity in administrative and management structures etc. Some of them are mentioned and elaborated on in this report, but not all. In future projects that may be the result of this report, relevant views should be developed and eventual action plans set in place in order to answer certain needs. Not all comments and suggestions that have been brought forth are relevant to the topic that is the focus of this project; nevertheless they are relevant for other administrative areas and worth considering for future action. Therefore it is necessary for the administrative organization to document and sort the outcomes of the stakeholders' analyses for future use.

Areas that have been identified as necessary for future mapping in separate projects are:

- Outgoing exchange students.
- PhD students.
- Credit transfer and recognition of studies.
- Benchmarking in order to make a comparative study with this project report as a basis.

We have found that it has been necessary to perform an extensive internal self-evaluation and analysis in order to define and describe our own organizational and administrative structures. A benchmarking and extended external analysis will have to be the next step and is not appropriate to include within the framework of this report. We also see that an essential part of the external analysis is the evaluation to be performed by the external assessors.