



Reading instructions and explanatory notes for Ethical policy for KTH

The policy summarises the ethical values and principles which should be shared by everyone who is active at KTH. The policy and its instructions are instruments to decide on ethical issues which arise in the activities. They are also a basis and stimulus for continued ethical discussion both within KTH and together with the surrounding community.

Ethical issues are primarily to be handled within the normal working environment and live discussion should also be part of all activities and at all levels. The students should be continuously exposed to/informed of/have discussions about ethical issues, as this is part of the program learning outcomes according to the Degree Ordinance.

As a national university and thereby a Swedish public authority, KTH's operations are controlled and regulated by laws, regulations and internal rules and regulations. The ethical policy and this document supplement and clarify the ethical aspects of these basic documents. For information on the regulation and management of specific issues/matters, KTH's rules and regulations shall take precedence.

These reading instructions are to be used as clarification of the various sections in the ethical policy. Italic text in boxes has been lifted directly from the policy.

Core values of KTH

KTH's core values are based on democracy, the equal value of human beings, human rights and freedom, and free and open discussion. Equality between men and women and the dissociation from all forms of discrimination are both an issue of quality and a natural part of KTH's core values. Equality and diversity among employees and students also represent important resources for KTH.

KTH's activities are based on the conviction that education and research can and should contribute to improved living conditions and to societal development that is ecologically, economically and socially sustainable. As a university of technology, KTH has a particular responsibility to develop and communicate knowledge that is needed to promote such sustainable development. Activities should be conducted in such a manner that KTH's resources are used efficiently without foregoing quality and service.

The progress of science is based on openness and collaboration. KTH works for the active dissemination of knowledge, free exchange of information, and national as well as international cooperation.

KTH's core values are based on the common values established for public administration.¹ They can be summarised in six basic principles: democracy, legality, objectivity, free formation of opinions and freedom of expression, respect for equality, freedom and dignity, together with efficiency and service.

¹ General details on KTH employee responsibilities:

<https://intra.kth.se/anstallning/anstallningsvillkor/att-vara-statligt-an/tjansteansvar>

General information on student disciplinary action: <https://intra.kth.se/utbildning/disciplinarenden>

<http://www.vardegrundsdelegationen.se/publikationer/skriften-den-gemensamma-vardegrunden-fo-r-de-statsanstallda/>

“Efficiency means that the business objectives set by the state authorities are achieved with reasonable resource effort and within stated financial and other frameworks. The term goal completion also includes quality requirements.”

“A prominent place in the service of government agencies assumes the requirement of providing information. ... The Swedish Administration Act states that the authorities ... shall provide information, guidance, advice and other such assistance to individuals in matters relating to the agency's area of business activity. Help can be provided to the extent appropriate in respect of the type of issue, the individual's requirement for help and the government agency's business.”

The education shall be provided with well-functioning coordination between the staff concerned in order to resolve all details within education and study administration, from initial application through to final exam.

Everyone working at KTH²

It is the responsibility of everyone working at KTH to treat each other with respect regardless of gender, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, political belief, social background, sexual orientation, disability or age.

Everyone working at KTH must, regardless of differences, be able to cooperate and collaborate professionally in a respectful manner with tolerance for personal and private difference but based on the principle of equal treatment.

Complaints of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and bullying must be made in accordance with KTH's applicable guidelines (see KTH's rules and regulations).

It is the responsibility of everyone working at KTH as representative of KTH and as scientific experts, to act objectively, impartially and honestly.

As a civil servant and acting on behalf of the public authority, the basic values for central government employees should be used as guidance, objectivity should prevail and personal opinions and relationships should not impact work undertaken.

Within scientific activity, the Swedish Research Council's code for researchers should be used as guidance; see <http://www.codex.vr.se/forskarensetik.shtml>.

In certain contexts, professor emeriti, individuals remunerated by KTH and external representatives of KTH bodies may represent KTH or seemingly act on its behalf. In these cases there is a specific risk of ambiguity about who the person represents. The requirements for clarity in terms of whether individuals represent KTH or themselves is applicable to all those working within KTH.

It is the responsibility of everyone working at KTH to contribute to KTH's neutrality and its political and religious independence.

² working, i.e. all active at KTH, not only employees.

The term neutrality includes elements such as incorruptibility, impartiality and fairness. Any activities which are party political or are religiously propagandist may not be conducted in KTH's name. KTH's resources must be used for educational purposes.

This highlights the issue of the extent to which one may use one's job title when conducting official political business. The basic values for state employees states that: "The state employee has the same expression and freedom of association as well as freedom of opinion as other citizens, and thus the same right to express their opinion, for example, on the Authority's activities and on current legislation. It is essential for a vital debate and development that the state employee can contribute with both supported facts and opinions. In addition, the wise and judicious state employee should not resort to publishing any inappropriateness or irregularities."

It is therefore one thing to use one's job title (as part of introducing one's self) in, for example, a polemical article, and something entirely different as part of a political association, even if created by KTH employees, to use KTH's name in adverts and information. In the latter case, it can be perceived as being publicly sanctioned by KTH as a public authority and university, which may be misleading if not true, especially if meetings are held on KTH's premises.

In accordance with the Swedish Higher Education Act Chapter 1 paragraph 13, a place of higher education must permit a democratically-founded association for students to use the teaching facilities at a gathering organised by the association for its members if the gathering is held for information, expression of opinions or other similar purpose or for performing artistic work. Those invited by the association to participate in the meeting may not be refused access to the meeting premises. However, this does not apply if it is likely that the meeting will create a serious disturbance or a violation of the law.

Interest groups can express an opinion to influence both KTH's management, other authorities and the government on various issues, but this must be kept separate from public positions taken by KTH and other authorities.

It is the responsibility of everyone working at KTH to avoid sideline activities which harm trust in KTH's scientific competence and impartiality.

"KTH considers it important that employees maintain contacts with the community, business and industry. It is extremely positive that employees participate in the public debate on science, education and technology and their role in society.

Work at KTH will be undertaken so that contacts and cooperation with the business community and society in general are promoted. Such interaction leads to increased knowledge of the various problems within companies and of business conditions, as well as in society in general. Exchange of experience and networking with the business community is of value to both education and research.

Teachers have an extended right to perform subject-related, research and development secondary employment known as R&D secondary occupations. Teachers, however, have an obligation to inform their employer as concerns these R&D secondary occupations." (Quote from KTH's Guideline for secondary occupations).

See KTH's rules and regulations for more information.

It is the responsibility of everyone working at KTH to handle potentially sensitive personal data with respect for personal integrity.

KTH manages personal data at different levels, from support (administration) to core processes (education and research). The general regulations governing what KTH is and is not permitted to do with personal data is set out in PUL, the Swedish Personal Data Act (1998:204). PUL aims to protect people against the violation of their personal privacy by the processing of their personal data. See KTH's internal website for more details.

It is the responsibility of everyone working at KTH not to use computer equipment or other resources provided by KTH for pornographic, racist or other inappropriate purposes.

KTH's resources shall be used for the commission of higher education institutions. KTH's regulations for the use of IT resources and computer networks are applicable to employees, students and external users. In order for authorisation to use KTH's computers, network and system resources, a contingent liability document must be signed.

"KTH is responsible for the web publication that is carried out with the aid of the computers and computer network provided by KTH. This applies to both resources owned by KTH and those arranged by KTH, e.g., through rental agreements.

Web publication with resources provided by KTH shall follow the applicable laws and ordinances, among them the Personal Data Act, SUNET's ethical rules and policies as well as the guidelines and regulations from KTH." (KTH's rules for the distribution of information via www). Any breach of these rules may result in suspension of use of KTH's computers, IT systems and networks.

It is the responsibility of everyone working at KTH to strive for a good working environment and good relationships between all who work and study at KTH.

The policy refers to a broad interpretation of 'working environment' and 'relationships'. For more detailed instructions, see KTH's rules and regulations, primarily the HR policy and associated guidelines. This is particularly important for those who have a leadership assignment.

Those with leadership assignments

It is the responsibility of everyone who has a leadership assignment within KTH to exercise their leadership and managership with respect for employees and insight of their position of dependence.

See the HR policy, Guidelines Management/leadership. Any action taken, particularly in terms of conflict management, must be done with the individual's integrity at the forefront. Anyone with a leadership assignment within KTH has an ongoing responsibility to develop their leadership and employeeship.

It is the responsibility of everyone who has a leadership assignment within KTH to contribute to decisions being made in a manner which is characterised by openness, clarity, objectivity and participation.

Decisions must be prepared and anchored with clear methods of participation. Decisions shall be made on grounds of fact, which must be summarised in the basis of the decision. Decisions made should be

communicated without any unnecessary delay. If there is a decision-making template, this should be used. Students have the right to be represented when decisions are made, or preparations take place that is of significance for their education or situation.

Education at KTH

All education at KTH should be characterised by mutual respect between students and teachers.

For example, this includes mutual respect for each others' time schedules and roles. Education must be carried out with high requirement levels both on the teachers' involvement and the students' work efforts.

The student web has information on the students' rights and obligations. It is important to be aware of this, for both students and teachers.

All education at KTH should be conducted without tolerance for bias, plagiarism, cheating, improper influence and other improprieties.

Respect for the knowledge and skills that the students will gain during their studies will reflect both the students' relationship with the studies and the teachers' relationship with the examination. All examinations should actively contribute to learning, and in a fair and legal manner, measure how the learning objectives are met. The teachers have a responsibility to inform oneself of bias rules in an educational context and actively work to prevent bias.

Any suspected plagiarism or other cheating within the education must be reported. The President/disciplinary board will decide on action to take.

The guidelines for dealing with plagiarism within KTH's education, as well as details of bias, are available in KTH's rules and regulations.

All education at KTH should be designed so that after completing their education, students can use basic ethical concepts of problems and opportunities within their own education area.

An education at KTH should provide a good basis for a thoughtful ethical approach in the students' future careers, so ethical issues should be included in all sections where relevant. The Swedish Higher Education Act, Appendix 2 - Degree Requirements Objectives, point 4, under the heading 'Evaluation ability and approach' states the learning objectives for all degrees regarding students' ability for ethical thinking and assessments.

Third cycle education

Third cycle education at KTH should also be conducted with insight into the specific requirements on supervisors which follow from the doctoral student's position of dependence.

The Swedish Research Council's report "Good research practice" (2011:1) says about the supervisor's task: "There are many ways to be a good supervisor. In general, someone who is appointed as a supervisor has a responsibility to create conditions that will help to develop the doctoral student's knowledge and skills. Through discussions, teaching and their own example, good supervisors transfer knowledge, skills and experience to their students and guide the research which they are undertaking." (p. 99).

Due to the doctoral student's position of dependency, the supervisor should take responsibility for the professional relationship with the doctoral student. A doctoral student may not be assigned tasks that are not relevant to postgraduate studies. The supervisor may not use their position of power to in any way compromise the students' integrity. If the relationship between the supervisor and student develops privately so that a bias situation arises, it is the supervisor's responsibility to report this to his or her superior so that the doctoral student may be given a new supervisor.

Third cycle education at KTH should also result in that after completing their education, doctoral students act based on research ethics, especially in the respects which are relevant for their own research area.

Third cycle education at KTH provides a good basis for a thoughtful ethical approach in the student's future career, which is why ethical issues are prevalent throughout the education. The degree requirement objectives state that students must "show intellectual independence and scientific reasonableness as well as the ability to make research ethical assessments." The Swedish Research Council's report "Good research practice" also states that the supervisor is responsible for ensuring the necessary permits are in place and that the project meets the ethical requirements of the relevant research. The supervisor is also responsible, for example, for ensuring that human medical testing is stopped if required to protect the volunteers. It is important that the supervisor leads by example and also takes responsibility for the students' education in respect of ethics.

Research

Research at KTH should be published and reported in such a manner that the efforts of colleagues are recognised in relation to their scientific contributions.

Research at KTH should maintain high quality and aim for technical and scientific progress and for international publication. Co-authorship is based on scientific contribution, not on administrative or financial contributions. Co-authorship means responsibility for what is published; see the Vancouver rules, International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals, <http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html>.

See also the Swedish Research Council's report "Good research practice", p. 94, CODEX -compilation of research regulations and guidelines <http://www.codex.uu.se/> and the Council of Science Editors (CSE) Recommendations for Group -Author Articles in Scientific Journals and Bibliometric Databases. The Committee on Publication Ethics, COPE, has also created guidelines on research publication.

Research at KTH should be conducted without tolerance for plagiarism, research falsification, improper influence and other improprieties.

Plagiarism and research falsification are included under the term scientific misconduct, see the Swedish Research Council's report "Good research practice", p. 107: "The definition of research misconduct used by the Swedish Research Council's expert group for the investigation of suspected misconduct was formulated by Associate Professor Birgitta Forsman (2007), and uses the current terminology of the scientific community. It states that research misconduct entails actions or omissions in research, which – consciously or through carelessness – lead to falsified or manipulated results or give misleading information about someone's contribution to the research.' [...] The reference to "consciously or through carelessness" means that the definition not only encompasses fraud, the

fabrication of data and plagiarism – that is, actions we regard as evidence of an intention to deceive; it also encompasses actions like continued carelessness, for example when a researcher would have been immediately able to realize that the results were distorted or when his or her own contribution is described incorrectly.”

Examples of other irregularities are misconduct against contributors, exaggeration of own merits in applications, duplication of publication that is not clearly disclosed to the reader, sexual harassment, coercion of colleagues, sabotage of colleagues' work.

The Swedish Research Council has written about preventative work, page 112: “to work to create a good research environment, characterized by a culture that does not tolerate research misconduct and that nurtures good practice. The individual researcher as well as department and faculty heads can contribute to creating such an environment.” The Council states: “Recurring discussions and information at a department are a way to create and maintain good research ethics. For doctoral students, the supervisor’s contributions can be supplemented with classes in research ethics as well as professional ethics that address issues of research misconduct in its various forms. Already during undergraduate studies, issues of at least plagiarism should be brought up”

It is essential that research colleagues clearly distance themselves from misconduct. “An environment where researchers’ work is normally open, allowing everyone to know what their colleagues are doing, how their work is getting on, how their texts look while under production, etc. offers fewer opportunities for misconduct than one where everyone works in isolation without an exchange of ideas or texts.”

If scientific misconduct is suspected, it must be reported (see KTH’s rules and regulations). The Head of School or Head of Department, and the Faculty Council/Dean have a duty to report any irregularities. The President shall decide in cases of suspected scientific misconduct and may hand over cases to the KTH Board for investigation of cases of suspected scientific misconduct for a statement. During the course of an investigation, the university can also obtain an opinion from the expert group for misconduct in research at Centrala etikprövningsnämnden (the Central Ethical Review Board) (HF chapter 1, paragraph 16).

Research at KTH should reflect over the social and environmental consequences of research results, and be conducted in a responsible manner in relation to these.

The research must systematically and critically seek new knowledge, both aimed at increasing our understanding of the world and such knowledge relevant to the development of technology and general society. Research will take place in forms where, as far as possible, researchers take responsibility for the social and environmental impact of the research findings, and for the research to contribute to sustainable development. The researchers must observe that the research could be used in several ways ("dual-use technology").

Proposals for cooperation, both national and international, shall be regularly reviewed regarding KTH's values and policies before any such cooperation shall commence.

Research at KTH must be carried out with respect for the individual’s autonomy and personal integrity.

Research on living persons, research on the deceased and on biological material from humans as well as research involving the management of sensitive personal data shall be subject to special examination according to the Ethics Assessment Act. There should be a moral approach surrounding people

involved in research; they should be well aware of what they are consenting to and should not be exposed to unnecessary suffering. The ethical requirements for student work shall not be lower than for research that is subject to review.

Basic provisions are contained in the Ethics Examination Act on Human Research (2003:460) and the Personal Data Act (1998:204). See more at: <http://www.epn.se>. See also KTH's rules and regulations on the treatment of personal data.

Research at KTH should fulfil strictly imposed requirements on sparing animals from unnecessary suffering.

It is forbidden to carry out animal testing that has not been approved in advance by an animal testing ethics board.

Basic provisions on experimental animals are contained in the Animal Welfare Act (1988:534) and the Animal Welfare Ordinance (1988:539). See also: <http://www.jordbruksverket.se/>.

Collaboration

KTH's collaboration with the surrounding community should be characterised by objectivity and integrity.

KTH's collaboration must be aimed at society in general, which means businesses, public administration, organisations, higher education institutions and individuals. Collaboration can be conducted in various forms, within research, development of technology, teaching, culture and other education. Proposals for cooperation, both national and international, shall be regularly reviewed regarding KTH's values and policies before any such cooperation commence.

KTH's collaboration with the surrounding community should be done in such a way that neither the integrity of education or research is compromised.

Links to commercial and other interests that may cause a conflict of interest or credibility should not only be reported openly, but carefully reviewed and valued before collaborations are established, so that ethical pitfalls can be avoided. This also applies when companies and organisations are invited in the context of education. Before degree projects are begun, an agreement should be concluded so that the results of the work can be published and examined. Of particular importance are the ethical aspects, including the issue of legal rights when research results are commercialised within an own company.

See also KTH's rules and regulations on intellectual property created at KTH.

KTH's collaboration with the surrounding community should promote democracy and the free exchange of information.

It is important that KTH employees contribute to the spread of knowledge such as through expert advice and popular scientific writing. KTH also takes a positive view of employees and students being active in public debates. Openness towards the public and the media should be seen as part of the core business in collaboration and not categorised as marketing.

It is prohibited by law to attempt to find out the identity of leaks/whistle blowers who have contacted journalists (informant protection). See also the law (2016:749) on specific protection against reprisals for employees who whistleblow on issues of serious misconduct.

KTH's collaboration with the surrounding community should be done in cooperation, where all students and researchers have reasonable terms and conditions and nobody is subjected to discrimination.

KTH should only participate in international cooperation that contributes to development and to an open exchange of information, not to legitimise oppression and discrimination.

Before considering any possible cooperation, ethical considerations shall be taken into account. Ongoing collaborations should also be evaluated periodically from an ethical perspective.