Terms of reference for the Language Strategy at University of Copenhagen (project years 2-5)

Background

In the University of Copenhagen’s Strategy 2016, the improvement of language skills is emphasized as a focus area:

‘We will concentrate on improving the language skills of both the students and the staff, also in other foreign languages besides English.’

To initiate the Strategy, the Rector set up the Language Strategy Committee in the early summer of 2012, with the purpose of establishing a strategy for improving the language skills of students outside the language programmes. All six faculties, the students and the Central Administration were represented in the Committee, serviced by the secretariat at the Faculty of Humanities, University of Copenhagen.

In accordance with the recommendation from the Language Strategy Committee, the University decided to launch a five-year research-supported development project. The development project was embedded in the Faculty of Humanities, which hereby became the domicile for the project.

During the first year of the project an inter-faculty steering committee was set up, consisting of representatives from all faculties, the students and the Central Administration. The head of the steering committee was appointed by the faculty in charge of the project. A patron of the project was also appointed.

The implementation process was, following the recommendation of the Language Strategy Committee, divided into two phases: a preparatory first year during which a needs analysis could be initiated, and the following four years in which the actual implementation of the project could take place.

Terms of reference for project years 2-5

Following the recommendations and conclusions of the Language Strategy Committee, and the experience from the first year of the project, the faculty in charge of the project should initiate the following initiatives.

1. Establish, publish and maintain a database containing all language supporting activities at the University of Copenhagen, including an assessment of the potential for embedment in the actual activities.
2. Assess of the need for maintaining and improving the students’ language skills in several languages: English, other foreign languages and Danish as a second language.

3. Assess of the need for maintaining and improving the PhD-students’ language skills through involvement of the graduate schools, also concerning possible pilot projects.

4. Test and evaluate of all relevant types of implementation models.

5. Examine which activities are needed to ensure that the students’ language skills are adequate in connection to a study or internship abroad.

6. Examine the language qualifications of international students’, so that activities can be recommended that can contribute to attracting and retaining highly qualified international students.

7. Examine the possibilities for incorporating focus on language skills in all Bachelor and Master programmes.

8. In collaboration with the inter-faculty steering committee, develop and evaluate the pilot projects financed by the strategy’s development fund and assess the potential for permanent embedment of these projects’.

9. Establish dialogue across the University about subjects in language policy that affect the students’ performance e.g. language qualifications and entry requirements, plus language requirements for courses and exams.

10. Ensure that the collected data as far as possible is used in research that can contribute to the development of UCPH’s educational policies.