

# English Style Guide

*A handbook for Swedish speakers writing in English*



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# 1 Introduction

English is growing day-by-day as an international language. It is now the corporate language in many international companies and a strong command of English is essential for effective communication. Consequently, being able to write in accordance with generally accepted principles in English is a prerequisite. It is crucial to establish conventions for the publications of Growth Analysis as this will contribute to consistency and a high quality of written material.

This handbook is intended as guidance material for Swedish speakers writing in English. The operations of Growth Analysis and its publications have been taken into consideration for the contents of this style guide. It provides advice on how to attain a good style of writing and covers general conventions in English, including figures, currency, capital letters, punctuation and so forth. The subsequent sections address common business abbreviations, an overview of the differences between British and American English, the use of 'Swenglish' and common mistakes in English. Advice on writing reports on Swedish legislation is also included and the last section is a list of useful references. The overall aim of this style guide is to provide Swedish speakers with the necessary knowledge to write accurately in English.

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## 2 General advice

### 2.1 Style of writing

Everyone has a unique style of writing. A writer's style of writing reflects his personality, reasoning and thought process. The key to a good style of writing is **clarity** and **simplicity**. What makes perfect sense to you might puzzle your reader. When writing you should pay heed to your **target audience** and your choice of vocabulary, sentence structure and diction should be tailored towards your reader.

The following should be avoided in order to attain a good style of writing:

- **Jargon** – should be avoided at all costs. Technical terms should only be used in their proper context. In many instances plain English can do the job.
- **Metaphors** – keep these to a minimum. Given that Growth Analysis has worldwide operations the chances are that your documents will be read by colleagues in all corners of the globe. Consequently, it is essential that your style of writing caters for a global audience. Metaphors can easily be misinterpreted and unless the metaphors you use are widely recognised (for instance, IT bubble, stock market crash) they should be used moderately.
- **Unnecessary words** – Certain words are often redundant, they do not add anything but length to your text. It is common in Swedish to use 'så-kallade' but does the use of this expression enhance the quality of your text? Can you do without it and still convey the same meaning?

### 2.2 Proofreading

Always proofread your work and if possible ask a colleague to read it as well. The most effective way of proofreading is to read the text several times and to focus on different aspects of the text each time.

When proofreading look for errors in the following categories:

- **'Typos'** – this includes misspelt words, punctuation mistakes, wrong numbers and incorrect word order.
- **Layout mistakes** – wrongly positioned text (including captions, headings) or illustrations, incorrect line spacing, missing items.
- Wrong fonts – errors in the use of italic, bold etc.

### 2.3 British English (BrE) versus American English (AmE)

The use of British English (hereinafter referred to as BrE) is to be preferred over American English (hereinafter referred to as AmE). The Government Offices of Sweden have opted for BrE and the European Commission Directorate-General for Translation also advocates the use of BrE. The differences between BrE and AmE will be addressed later in this handbook, refer to section 5. Note however, that the names of American bodies may retain the original spellings, e.g., Department of Defense.

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## 3 General conventions in English

### 3.1 Spelling

You should **follow standard British usage**, but remember that influences are crossing the Atlantic all the time (for example, the spelling of *program* and *disk* have become standard British usage in data processing, while *sulfur* has replaced *sulphur* in scientific and technical usage).

In line with the Oxford English Dictionary, you should **use –ize spelling** (rather than ise-spelling) for words which are acceptable in BrE, e.g., organization, specialize, modernize, analyze. However, there are **some exceptions to this rule**, the following words are always spelt with –ise:

advertise	devise	practise
advise	disguise	precise
apprise	enterprise	premise
arise	excise	prise (open)
braise	exercise	reprise
chastise	expertise	revise
circumcise	franchise	supervise
comprise	guise	surmise
compromise	incise	surprise
concise	improvise	televise
demise	merchandise	treatise
despise		

Other points to bear in mind with regard to spelling:

- Do **not** rely on computer program spell-checks.
- Although as a standard you should use British spelling, you need to check the official website or other reference material of the organization for its **preferred spelling**.
- Do **not** alter spelling in a quotation.

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## 3.2 References to Swedish institutions and places

### 3.2.1 Institutions

*Regeringen* is generally translated as ‘the Government’, i.e., with a **capital G**.

Use *Riksdag* and *Riksbank*. On first usage in a document, write ‘the Riksdag (the Swedish Parliament)’ or ‘the Riksbank (the Swedish central bank)’ if clarification is necessary or helpful.

For other organizations you should **use the English name** if the organization has one (refer to the organization’s website), otherwise use the Swedish name.

### 3.2.2 Places

Swedish place names should **retain** their Swedish spelling in English texts, thus you should write Göteborg, Skåne, Malmö. The same applies to personal names e.g., Wallström, Åkesson.

## 3.3 Figures

### 3.3.1 Numbers

In English a decimal point **replaces** a comma. Occasionally a colon may be used in Swedish which refers to a decimal point in English.

Swedish	English
18,5% av befolkningen	18.5% of the population
Övriga rörelseintäkter 300 000:50	Other operating income 300, 000.50

Million and billion can be abbreviated as **m** and **bn** when referring to money (e.g., £15m).

### 3.3.2 Percentages

In general, in the main body of a text you should **use per cent**, not the % symbol.

*Example:* The population fell by 12 per cent.

However, it is permissible to use the % symbol when many percentages are being stated.

*Example:* Of the remaining participants 26% were from London, 73% were from Birmingham and 1% was from Manchester.

Other points with regard to percentages:

- Per cent should be written as **two words**, it should **not** be written as percent.

- In English the % sign is written **directly next** to the number, there should **not** be a space between the sign and the number, i.e., 33% not 33 %.
- **Always** use the symbol % in tables with numbers.

### 3.3.3 Telephone numbers

The Swedish Standards Institute recommends that telephone numbers should be written in the form +46 8 405 10 00.

### 3.3.4 Dates

In accordance with the style of BrE, dates should always be written in the form **DD.MM.YYYY** or **DD.MM.YY**. (This is the **opposite** of the convention of writing dates in Swedish).

Dates should be in the form:

Swedish	English
14 juli 2010	14 July 2010 (no commas)
den 14 september	on 14 September
den 14:e november	on the 14 <sup>th</sup> of November
101114	14/11/10
20101114	14/11/2010

For decades **use numbers** not words, i.e., write: the 1990s (**not**: the nineties).

Also note that an apostrophe is **not** to be used with decades, i.e., write: in the 60s, during the 70s (**not**: in the 60's, during the 70's).

### 3.3.5 Time

Use the **24-hour system**. Use a colon to separate hours and minutes and a dash to separate ranges. *Example*: 13:00-14:30.

### 3.3.6 Fractions

Fractions should be **hyphenated** (e.g., two-thirds, five-eighths).

Do **not** compare a fraction to a decimal (so avoid 'the rate fell from 5½% to 4.5%').

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### 3.3.7 Units of measurement

There should **not** be a **space** between the number and the unit of measurement (i.e., 10km not 10 km).

Abbreviations for the names of units are the **same** singular and plural, and are **unpunctuated**, e.g., ‘cm’ not ‘cms’.

In text, units of measurement are abbreviated when used with a numeral (5kg) but spelled out otherwise, e.g., ‘the kilogram is a handy unit of measurement’.

Write units of measurement as per the table below.

Swedish	English
cm (centimeter)	cm (centimetres)
dagar	days
grader	degrees
tim. (timmar)	hr (hours)
kg (kilogram)	kg (kilograms)
km (kilometer)	km (kilometres)
km <sup>2</sup> (kvadratkilometer)	km <sup>2</sup> (square kilometres)
m (meter)	m (meters)
m <sup>2</sup> (kvadratmeter)	m <sup>2</sup> (square meters)
månader	months
p (poäng)	pt (points)
sek. (sekunder)	sec (seconds)

### 3.4 Currency

The following applies for currencies:

- Always **use numbers** to express sums of money.
- **Specify** the type of dollar or pound on first usage.
- The symbol/currency should **precede** the number (EUR 100, SEK 500). This convention is the **opposite of Swedish** where the symbol/currency comes after the number (100 EUR, 500 SEK).
- Like ‘pound’, ‘dollar’ or any other currency name in English, the word ‘euro’ is written in **lower-case**. Where appropriate, it takes the **plural ‘s’** (as does ‘cent’).
- *Example:* This book costs ten euros and fifty cents.

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### 3.5 E-expressions

Use the following as a style guide when writing internet or digital expressions:

- the internet, the World Wide Web, the Web, Web page, homepage, byte, CD-ROM, FTP (File Transfer Protocol), webserver, website, CD, DVD
- e-mail, e-business, e-marketing, e-customers
- online, offline.

### 3.6 Capital letters

The general rules for capitalization are as follows:

- **Headings** - use a capital letter for the **first word only** in chapter headings, sub-headings, tables, figures, box headings, captions and labels.
- **Specific/general references** - when a specific reference is made you should use capital letters and when referring to something in general, lower-case letters should be used.

*Examples of specific references*

-Statement by Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt

-On 29 May 1990, the Council adopted Directive 90/270/EEC on the minimum safety and health requirements for work with display screen equipment.

*Examples of general references*

-It was felt a directive rather than a regulation was the appropriate instrument.

-The principle of public access means that the general public and the media are guaranteed insight into the activities of central government and the municipal authorities.

- **Political parties** - The full name of political parties is in capitals, including the word party, i.e., the Republican Party, the Social Democrats. Also note that 'the' should precede the title and be lower-case.

#### Places

- Use **capital letters** for **definite** geographical places, regions, areas, countries and buildings as well as for recognised geographical areas and governmental departments (the Foreign Office, the Gulf, Central America, the Middle East).
- **Compass points** - use **lower-case** for east, west, north south except for when these form part of a name (North Korea, South Africa, West End).
- **Quotations** - start with a capital in running text **only** if the quotation is a complete sentence in itself.

*Examples*

-Göran Persson once said, 'Remember one thing - that Sweden is performing better than the rest of Europe'.

-The American Government favours 'a two-way street in arms procurement'.

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- **Trade names** - are **normally capitalised, unless** they have become **generic terms**, such as aspirin, nylon, hoover, celluloid. However the rule is to capitalise registered trade names such as Airbus, Boeing, Tetra Pak, Land Rover.

### 3.7 Titles

- **Personal names and titles**

- Surnames are **not** normally written in capitals in running text in English (thus Mr Wiberg not Mr WIBERG).

-**Avoid** the non-English practice of using the initial for the first name in running text. Wherever possible write out the first name when used for the first time and just use the surname thereafter.

*Example:* Mona Sahlin (first mention), Sahlin (thereafter)

-As a matter of courtesy use 'Ms' instead of 'Mrs' or 'Miss' unless you know that the female concerned prefers otherwise.

- Note that Mr, Ms and Dr are written **without** a point (i.e., Mr Persson, Dr Peters not Mr. Persson, Dr. Peters)

- Names of bodies

-If an international organization has an official name in English, always use it.

*Example:* World Organisation for Animal Health (rather than Organisation Mondiale de la Santé Animale).

### 3.8 Punctuation

- **Full stop** - no additional full stop is required if a sentence ends with an abbreviation that takes a point (for instance 'etc.') or with a quotation complete in itself that ends in a full stop before the final quote.

*Example:* England, France, Germany, Italy etc.

*Example:* Sven Göran Eriksson said 'The greatest barrier to success is the fear of failure.'

- **Commas** - use these as an **aid to understanding**. Too many commas in one sentence can be confusing. Do **not** use a comma before a conjunction, i.e., you should write: innovative, academically, respectable and accessible writing **not**: innovative, academically, respectable, and accessible writing (i.e., there is no need to add a comma after 'respectable').

- **Apostrophes** - stick to these three rules:

Use the ending 's after **singular words** or **names that end in s**.

*Example:* boss's, Magnus's, St James's

Use 's after **plurals that end in s**

*Example:* footballer's, children's, women's

Use the ending s' on **plurals that end in s**

*Example:* bosses', glasses', trees'

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## 4 Abbreviations

Unless an abbreviation is so familiar (for example BBC, IMF, NATO) that it is used more often than the full form, you should write the words **in full** the first time they appear in a text. Try **not** to repeat the abbreviation too often after the first mention, so write ‘the Union’ rather than ‘the EU’, ‘the Bank’ rather than ‘the ECB’. This will serve to improve the flow of the text and to avoid too many capital letters on a page. You do not need to provide the initials of an organization if it is not mentioned again.

Use **lower-case** for measures kg, km, cm, i.e., and e.g., (note that both i.e., and e.g., are **followed** by a comma). When used with figures, these lower-case abbreviations should follow **immediately**, with no space (11:30am, 15kg not 11:30 am, 15 kg).

Abbreviations which take **upper-case letters** are also written in upper-case letters when stated in full (for example NPB is the **National Police Board**, IMF is the **International Monetary Fund**).

Where an organization is referred to in the original language by an abbreviation, do **not** translate it with an improvised English one. Instead, give the English name followed by the **original abbreviation** in brackets upon first mention, and include the original name as well if it is given.

*Example:* the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) not (GSDP)

Note that plurals of abbreviations are **not** written with an **apostrophe**.

*Example:* MEPs, SMEs, UFOs **not** MEP’s, SME’s, UFO’s

### 4.1 Common business abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full form
ABC	activity-based costing
ACH	automated clearing house
AGM	annual general meeting
APR	annualised percentage rate (of interest)
CAPM	capital asset pricing model
CCA	current cost accounting
CD	certificate of deposit
CGT	capital gains tax
cif	cost, insurance, freight
CRC	current replacement cost
DCF	discounted cash flow
EBIT	earnings before interest and tax

EBITDA	earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation
EDP	electronic data processing
EFT	electronic funds transfer
EPS	earnings per share
EV	economic value
EVA	economic value added
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FIFO	first in, first out (used for valuing stock/inventory)
FSA	Financial Services Authority
IPO	initial public offering
IRR	internal rate of return
JIT	just-in-time
LIFO	last in, first out
M&A	mergers and acquisitions
MBI	management buy-in
MBO	management buy-out
MCT	mainstream corporation tax
MLR	minimum lending rate
NBV	net book value
NGO	non-governmental organization
NPV	net present value; no par value
NRV	net realisable value
P&L	profit and loss
P/E	price/earnings (ratio)
PPP	purchasing power parity
PSBR	public-sector borrowing rate
R&D	research and development
ROA	return on assets
ROCE	return on capital employment
ROE	return on equity
ROI	return on investment

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RONA	return on net assets
ROOA	return on operating assets
ROTA	return on total assets
SDR	special drawing right (at the IMF)
SET	secure electronic transaction
SITC	standard international trade classification
SME	small and medium-sized enterprises
SRO	self-regulating organization
STRGL	statement of total recognized gains and losses
T-bill	Treasury bill
TQM	total quality management
TSR	total shareholder return
WDV	written down value
WIP	work-in-progress
XBRL	extensible business reporting language
ZBB	zero base budgeting

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## 5 British English (BrE) and American English (AmE)

As mentioned earlier, British English (BrE) is to be **preferred over** American English (AmE). The Government Offices of Sweden use BrE and the European Commission Directorate-General for Translation also advocates the use of BrE. There are large differences between English, both written and spoken in America and English used in Britain. There are considerable risks of misunderstanding, even offence, when using words or phrases which are unfamiliar or mean something else across the Atlantic. As an example, 'it went like a bomb' in BrE means that it was a great success. However, in AmE 'it bombed' means it was a disaster.

### 5.1 Spelling

The spelling conventions between AmE and BrE are different. Generally speaking, AmE is more phonetic than BrE. For instance, the British spelling is **sizable** while Americans would write this as **sizeable**, similarly **draught** becomes **draft**. The following is an overview of the main differences in terms of spelling between the two types of English.

**-eable/-able:** the silent **e**, which is created when forming adjectives with this suffix is

British	American
likeable, unshakeable	likable, unshakable

excluded in AmE.

**-ce/-se:** in BrE the verb that relates to a noun ending in **-ce** is sometimes given the ending **-se**, thus **advice** (noun), **advise** (verb).

British	American
device, licence, practice	devise, license, practise

**-e/-ue:** the final silent **e** or **ue** is used in British spelling, but excluded in American spelling.

British	American
analogue, axe, catalogue	analog, ax, catalog

**-our/-or:** Most BrE words ending in **-our** are written without the **u** in AmE.

British	American
behaviour, demeanour, favour	behavior, demeanor, favor

**-t/ed** (past tense): BrE uses **-t** while AmE uses **-ed**.

British	American
spelt, learnt, burnt, dreamt	spelled, learned, burned, dreamed

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## 5.2 Differences in accounting terminology

<b>British</b>	<b>American</b>
acquisition accounting	purchase accounting
articles of association	bylaws
balance sheet	statement of financial position
bills	notes
bonus or scrip issue	stock dividend or stock split
closing rate method	current rate method
creditors	payables
debtors	receivables
deferred tax	deferred income tax
depreciation	amortisation
exceptional items	unusual items
finance leases	capital leases
land and buildings	real estate
merger accounting	pooling of interests
nominal value	par value
non-pension post-employment benefits	OPEBs
ordinary shares	common stock
own shares purchased but not cancelled	Treasury stock
preference shares	preferred stock
profit and loss account	income statement
profit for the financial year	net income
provisions	allowances
share premium	additional paid-in capital
shareholders' funds	stockholders' equity
stocks	inventories
turnover	revenues
undistributable reserves	restricted surplus

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## 6 Swenglish

In Sweden, English is taught as a subject from grade 6 in compulsory school and the significance of English in the media is ever increasing, a combination which contributes to Swedes having a good command of the English language. Nonetheless, it is not unusual to hear Swedes speaking ‘Swenglish’, a combination of Swedish and English, which is most probably the result of the two languages being fairly similar. Embarrassing mistakes are often made, the result being a negative impact on the corporate image of an organization. Most of us can recall the infamous words of BP Chairman Carl-Henric Svanberg, when he referred to persons impacted by the Gulf oil spill as ‘the small people’. It is safe to say that Svanberg was not referring to short or insignificant people, but rather ‘vanligt folk’, i.e., local businesses and local citizens. Svanberg’s remark is a fine example of Swenglish, one which he had to apologise for profusely. This example clearly illustrates that Swedish cannot be translated directly into English, that it is important to take into account the differences in mentality between the two nations and that the context of the text also plays a role. There are large differences between the style of writing between the two languages and these distinctions will be addressed in this section.

### 6.1 Use of exclamation marks

Swedes love to use exclamation marks! The greeting ‘hej!’ is followed by an exclamation mark, as are common expressions like ‘Hjärtligt välkommen!’, ‘Vänligen bokstavera!’, ‘Trevlig helg!’ The list of exclamation marks is endless. Although the intention of Swedes when using exclamation marks is to adopt a friendly approach or to draw attention to something in particular, formal texts in English do **not** use exclamation marks. A native English speaker would not use exclamation marks while writing formal documents. They appear unprofessional and are not found on, for instance, reputable sources like the BBC, the Economist or any other prominent English website. So if you are writing a **formal text**, such as a report, press release or a presentation, do not use exclamation marks.

The above does not imply that exclamation marks do not exist in English. In English, exclamation marks are used solely to mark exclamations, such as ‘How we laughed!’ or ‘What a fiasco!’, or to add exclamatory force to a statement, e.g., ‘Two million cows had to die!’ Exclamatory expressions are appropriate in texts that directly address the reader or audience, such as speeches or informal instructions, but are usually out of place in formal texts.

### 6.2 Use of ‘bland annat’ and ‘så-kallade’

‘Bland annat’ is frequently used in Swedish texts. This translates as ‘among other things’, ‘including’ or ‘inter alia’. However, if you are translating a Swedish text into English it is **not** always necessary to translate ‘bland annat’. As an example, consider the sentence ‘Formuläret omfattar, bland annat, allmänna bestämmelser om uthyrningsvillkoren, ersättningar och verktyg.’ If in the translation you include ‘bland annat’ this would translate as ‘The form covers, among other things, general provisions on the rental

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conditions, compensation and equipment'. However, the word 'covers' suggests that that these things (the general provisions, compensation and equipment) are included, thus 'among other things' is **not** necessary, it can be **excluded** so as to read 'The form covers general provisions on the rental conditions, compensation and equipment'. In other words, you should use your **judgement** to determine when to use 'bland annat' in English, but bear in mind that it is not used as frequently as in Swedish and if you can convey the same meaning without writing 'bland annat' then do so.

As mentioned in section 2, the term 'så-kallade' is widely used in Swedish. However, in English 'so-called' represents an expression which is unnecessary. Including 'so-called' does not serve as an aid to understanding or improve the quality of your writing. In fact, the term 'so-called' may even have negative connotations in English.

*Example:* Turkish views of the so-called Armenian genocide

The above example is the title of a news article. The use of 'so-called' in the title has a negative implication as it suggests that the genocide did not actually take place. Thus, as with 'bland annat' you should use your judgement to determine whether 'so-called' is necessary to use.

### 6.3 Common mistakes – same word different meaning

There are numerous words in English and Swedish which are the same, or very similar, although they do not have the same meaning, or are not used in the same way in English as in Swedish. The following is a list of some tricky words which are similar in both languages.

**Aktuellt** - current, topical, pertinent, the present

**Actually** - is equivalent to the Swedish word 'faktiskt' or sometimes 'verkligen'.

**Bransch** - industry, business

**Branch** - filial, avdelningskontor

**Eventuellt** - possible, possibly

**Eventually** - slutligen, till slut, till sist

**Fabrik** - factory, industrial works

**Fabric**- tyg, textil

**Gymnasium** - upper secondary school

**Gymnasium** - gymnastiklokal, idrottslokal

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**Koncern** - group

**Concern** - angelägenhet, bekymmer, affärsrörelse

**Konkurrent** - competitor

**Concurrent** - bidragande orsak, samtidigt

**Konsekvent** - consistent

**Consequent** - följande

**Kontrollera (kolla)** - check

**Control** - ha kontroll över, behärska

**Kritik** - criticism

**Critic** - kritiker

**Receipt** - doctor's prescription or recipe for food

**Receipt** – kvitto, mottagningsbevis

**Semester** – holiday, vacation

**Semester** – termin, for example 'the school semester/term starts in August'.

**Överta** – take over

**Overtake** – hinna ifatt, köra om

**Vrist-** ankle (on your foot)

**Wrist** – handled (connects your hand to your arm).

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## 7 Common mistakes in English

### **Affect or effect?**

‘Affect’ and ‘effect’ are two words which have a similar or identical pronunciation in spoken English, but have different meanings when used correctly in written English. The real problem arises when people confuse “affect” with the second: “effect.” They are two different words with different usage. The most common use of “effect” is as a noun while “affect” is a verb: “When I left the stove on, the *effect* was that the house filled with smoke.” When you *affect* a situation, you have an *effect* on it.

### **Alternate or alternative?**

Alternate when used as an adjective, refers to every other.

*Example:* The safety delegate was required to carry out inspections every other month.

Alternative refers to options.

*Example:* Choose the alternative best suited to your requirements.

### **Among or between?**

‘Among’ is appropriate to describe broad relationships when more than two things are involved.

*Example:* Deforestation is among the world’s environmental problems.

‘Between’ is used to describe specific relationships involving only two things.

*Example:* A satisfactory agreement was reached between the two countries.

### **Amount of or number of?**

‘Amount of’ is used for items which cannot be counted.

*Example:* The amount of heat is lowered every three minutes.

‘Number of’ is used when referring to items which can be counted.

*Example:* The number of housing applications has fallen in recent years.

### **Compare with or compare to?**

There are two ways of making comparisons in English. Depending on the context you can either compare A to B or compare A with B.

A is compared with B when you draw attention to the difference.

*Example:* Comparing Sony Ericsson’s standard range of mobiles with the GreenHeart™ range reveals significantly lower energy consumption by the latter.

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A is compared to B when you want to highlight their similarity.

Paris has been compared to ancient Athens.

### **Due - three meanings**

Depending on the context, due to has three meanings:

(1) caused by - for example 'The game was cancelled due to the rain'.

(2) owed to - in the sense of being indebted to someone, 'Karl is due a month's salary.'

(3) arranged or timed to - for instance 'The meeting was due to end 10 minutes ago'.

### **Different from, different to or different than?**

Although a common misconception, the correct term is different from. Do not use different to or different than.

### **Last or latest?**

'The last issue of *Sydsvenskan*' implies that it no longer exists, that the newspaper is extinct. The correct way of stating this is 'The latest issue of *Sydsvenskan*'. Alternatively, you can use 'most recent', or 'current issue'. On the other hand the use of last in the sentence 'Last week witnessed heavy rain' is perfectly fine, as it is referring to the previous week. Thus 'latest' is the equivalent of 'senaste' while last refers to 'sista' in Swedish.

### **Persons or people?**

'Person' is one of those nouns which has an irregular plural. 'People' is in fact the plural form of person and should be reserved for informal usage or speech. Persons is normally a more formal use and should be used for instance when writing reports and official documentation.

*Examples:*

The police have arrested four persons in connection with the shooting.

Three persons are being held in custody.

Five persons will appear in court.

Also note that it is advisable to be specific about the persons involved, i.e., you can mention their titles instead of overusing 'persons'. So write: four employees, two nurses, 33 miners, 5 individuals.

### **Principal or principle?**

These two terms are often confused.

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Principal means 'first, primary, or main'. It may also refer to the head of a school. In certain fields it has a specific meaning: in law, a principal empowers another to act as his or her representative, in finance, the principal is the capital of a financial holding as distinguished from the interest.

Principle refers to an accepted or professed rule of action or conduct.

*Example:* The course focuses on basic management principles.

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## 8 Writing reports on Swedish legislation – establishing general conventions and hints and tips

Legislation is regularly cited in the publications of Growth Analysis. Thus it is essential that you are aware of how to refer to legislation correctly.

The following represents a list of general conventions for citing legislation:

- When referring to legislation, use the **English translations** which can be found on the website of the Government Offices of Sweden.

Refer to:

(1) Swedish statutes in translation: <http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/3288/a/139678/am/list>

(2) Government terms: <http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/2979>

In cases where there is no translation of a regulation use the Swedish title with a translation **in parentheses**.

- The Swedish term *lag* refers to ‘Act’ in English and *förordning* is ‘Ordinance’. However, note that within the EU *förordning* refers to ‘Regulation’.
- The symbol § should be written out as ‘Section’. For instance *enligt 6 kap. 1 § nämnda lag* translates as ‘in accordance with Chapter 6, Section 1 of the Act mentioned’.
- The word *enligt* is used in Swedish when citing legislation.

*Example:*

*enligt bestämmelserna i 60 kap. 12-14 §§ inkomstskattelagen*

in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 60, Sections 12 -14 of the Income Tax Act  
*Enligt* can be translated as ‘in accordance with’, ‘pursuant to’ or in some cases ‘as per’.

- When referring to Government Bills, use established English translations. Follow this pattern:

prop. 1998/99:143, 1999/2000:KU6, rskr. 1999/2000:69

Government Bill 1998/99:143, Committee Report 1999/2000:KU6, Government Communication 1999/2000:69

Translation of government/parliamentary documents:

proposition, prop.	Government Bill, Govt. Bill
riksdagsskrivelse, rskr.	Riksdag Communication, Riksdag Comm.
departementsskrivelse, dskr.	Ministry Communication, Min. Comm.
SOU	SOU (Swedish Government Official Reports)

regeringsskrivelse	Government Communication
utskottsbetänkande	Committee Report
Regeringsförklaring	Statement of Government Policy
Utrikesdeklaration	Statement of Government Policy on Foreign Affairs
Departementsserie, Ds	Ministry Publication Series

### Hints and tips for researching legislation

As mentioned earlier, English titles of legislation should be used. Obtaining the translation of an Act/Ordinance can sometimes prove to be tricky. The following is useful to attain the official translation of an Act/Ordinance:

- Locate the number of the Act in Swedish. In a search engine, e.g., google, type the number of the Act and then the word Act followed by site:se. You should now obtain the translation of the Act.

*Example:* 'Inkomstskattelag' - the number of this Act is 1999:1229 – in google type:

1999:1229 + Act site:se

- In many cases you will be able to locate the Act in Swedish on the website of the Government Offices of Sweden. However you might not be able to find the English translation of the Act on the website of the Government Offices of Sweden but instead you will find a PDF in Swedish. You should open the Swedish PDF file as this usually contains a summary in English which will include a translation of the Act. Recent acts contain summaries in English.
- The EUR-Lex website is a valuable resource for locating translations of legislation. The EUR-Lex website provides free access to European Union law and other documents considered to be public. The website has a bilingual display which makes it possible to view documents side by side and easily locate the translation.
- Another trick to obtain the translation of a specific legislation is to type the legislation in Swedish in google and next to it type an English word which would clearly form part of the translation. The search results will contain examples of text where the convention is written in Swedish and contains the English translation in parentheses. In most cases the search results will include a link to the EUR-Lex website where you can view the text in a bilingual display and obtain the translation.

*Example:* for *överförandekonvention* in google type 'överförandekonvention convention'

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## 9 Useful references

In addition to the Government website (<http://www.sweden.gov.se/>) some of the most useful resources are the Riksdag (<http://www.riksdagen.se/>), the Riksbank (<http://www.riksbank.com/>), Statistics Sweden (<http://www.scb.se/>) and the Swedish Institute (<http://www.si.se/Svenska/>).

The following bilingual/multilingual glossaries are also useful:

### **British English**

‘BritSpeak – the Language of the British’ by Simon Francis.

Publication: Gleerups.

ISBN: 978-91-40-64499-2

### **Computers**

*Svenska datatermgruppen*

<http://www.nada.kth.se/dataterm/>

### **Education**

*Utbildningsdepartementet, Ordbok för utbildnings- och forskningsområdet*

[http://www.programkontoret.se/Global/material/ordbok\\_utbildningsområdet\\_slutversion2008.pdf](http://www.programkontoret.se/Global/material/ordbok_utbildningsområdet_slutversion2008.pdf)

### **Environment**

EEA multilingual environmental glossary

<http://glossary.eea.europa.eu/EEAGlossary>

### **EU**

[http://europa.eu/scadplus/glossary/index\\_sv.htm](http://europa.eu/scadplus/glossary/index_sv.htm)

You can search the index in any language, locate the article you need and switch between language versions.

*Redaktionella och språkliga frågor i EU-arbetet* (SB PM 2005:3)

<http://www.regeringen.se/content/1/c4/34/95/f58bd44d.pdf>

Contains useful information for English as well as Swedish writers.

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## **Legal**

*Domstolsverkets ordlista*

<http://www.domstol.se/Publikationer/Ordlista/Ordlista.pdf>

## **Medical**

*Karolinska Institutet*

[http://mesh.kib.ki.se/swemesh/swemesh\\_se.cfm](http://mesh.kib.ki.se/swemesh/swemesh_se.cfm)

## **Social**

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/emire/sweden.htm>

In addition, the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office has useful country profiles.

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/>