

## **National Report on Curriculum Innovation**

### **Iceland –**

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### **1. Introduction**

To begin, I would like to point out that the population of Iceland is 270,000, of which 110,000 live in Reykjavik (the capital of Iceland) and the surrounding area. It is of great importance to be aware of this fact when Icelandic topics are discussed.

Icelanders are known for their extensive literary output in medieval times and there is evidence to suggest that they exported books to other countries and even wrote books especially for export. The language, Icelandic, was therefore recorded early in the nation's history and has remained grammatically the same up to the present day. Icelanders jealously guard their language, and their work to develop Icelandic neologisms instead of adopting international words has attracted the attention of the international linguistic community.

Iceland is, geologically speaking, among the youngest countries in the world. The weather is typical of a mild coastal climate, though the winter storms can be fierce and the summers are cool by continental standards. The average temperature in Reykjavik in July is +10.6°C and in January -0.9°C. Reykjavik in southwest Iceland is Iceland's capital city. There is one international airport at Keflavik, 50 km from Reykjavik. More than half the population of Iceland now lives in Reykjavik and the surrounding towns.

Some information about the education system in Iceland can be found in Eurybase [www.eurydice.org/Eurybase](http://www.eurydice.org/Eurybase)

#### **1.1 The system of higher education**

The modern Icelandic system of higher education dates back to the foundation of the University of Iceland in 1911. The University of Iceland remains the principal institution of higher learning in Iceland, but over the last three decades new institutions of higher education have emerged with a more specialised focus, creating greater diversity at the higher education level. The University of Iceland (Háskóli Íslands) is a state university founded in 1911. During its first year of operation 45 male students were enrolled. Today, the University of Iceland serves a nation of approximately 270,000 people and provides instruction for some 6,000 students (59% of them female) studying in nine faculties. In addition to the major faculties there are numerous research institutes attached to the University. With its 396 tenured teachers, some 1,250 non-tenured teachers, and about 281 researchers and administrators, the University of Iceland is the largest single work-place in the country. For its first 29 years the University was housed in the Icelandic Parliament building, the Althingi, in the centre of Reykjavik. In 1933, the University received a special licence from the Althing to operate a cash-prize lottery. The University Lottery, which commenced operations in 1934, remains a major source of funding for the construction of university buildings. In 1940, the University

moved into its Main Building on the University Campus on Suðurgata, where most of the principal buildings of the University are located today.

A modern, diversified, and rapidly-developing institution, the University of Iceland offers opportunities for study and research in more than 50 degree programmes in the humanities, science and social sciences, and in professional fields such as theology, law, business, medicine, odontology and engineering.

### University Education

A new law of higher education, enacted in 1997, establishes the general framework for the activities of these institutions. Under the law, the Icelandic term "haskoli" is used to refer both to traditional universities and institutions which do not have research responsibilities.

According to the law the Minister of Education, Science and Culture determines whether and to what extent institutions shall engage in research, rules on quality evaluation and recognition of all degrees offered. The role of each higher education institution is further defined in separate legislation on their activities. They have full authority on all academic matters. The law does not make a distinction between universities and non-universities. All higher education institutions offer university degrees. Except for three art colleges other institutions that previously belonged to the non-university sector have now been upgraded and merged with university institutions. During the next three years the remaining three art colleges will be merged into one art academy that will offer university degrees in the arts. Presently there are seven "haskoli" in the country. Two of these are private, but are run with state support. The universities are:

The University of Iceland (Háskóli Íslands),

the Iceland University of Education (Kennaraháskóli Íslands),

the University of Akureyri (Háskólinn á Akureyri),

the Icelandic College of Engineering and Technology (Tækniskóli Íslands),

the Co-operative College of Iceland (Samvinnuháskólinn á Bifröst),

the Hvanneyri Department of Agricultural Science (Búvísindadeild Bændaskólans á Hvanneyri) and

the Reykjavik School of Business (Viðskiptaháskólinn í Reykjavík, háskólinn í Reykjavík).

In addition there are the three art colleges that are being upgraded and will over the next three years be merged into one university institution, the Icelandic Academy of Arts (Listaháskóli Íslands), that will offer university degrees in the arts. These colleges are: The Reykjavik School of Music (Tónlistarskólinn í Reykjavík), the Icelandic College of Arts and Crafts (Myndlista- og handiðaskóli Íslands) and the Icelandic Drama School (Leiklistarskóli Íslands).

### Admission Requirements

Students entering a university are required to have passed the Icelandic matriculation examination (stúdentapróf: upper-secondary school leaving examination, at 19 or 20) or to have completed other equivalent education. Also, admission can be given to those who have acquired equivalent maturity and knowledge according to the evaluation of the institution in question. Universities can impose further admission requirements, including admission examinations. For most courses of study there are no general restrictions on admission for those who have passed the matriculation examination. However, in health programmes, medicine, pharmacy, nursing, physiotherapy, and dentistry, admission is restricted by numerus clausus, where a competitive examination is held at the end of the first semester and a limited number of students with the highest grades are allowed to continue in the programme. Also, in pharmacy and the natural sciences, and in some technical programmes students are required to have matriculated from a mathematics, physics, or natural sciences branch of study at an upper secondary school. For teacher training programmes and some business and computer science programmes, students are selected on the basis of their grades

in the matriculation examination and priority may be given to students with particular work experience.

#### Academic Year

In most institutions of higher education the academic year lasts from September to May and is divided into two semesters, autumn and spring. The autumn semester starts at the beginning of September and lasts until late December. The spring semester runs from the beginning of January until the end of May.

#### Assessment, Grades, Credit System

Student assessment is generally based on written, oral or practical examinations, semester papers and assignments carried out throughout the whole course of study. Teachers are responsible for evaluation, but each university or college department provides the overall organisation of the examinations within the regulatory framework of the institution. In some cases there are external examiners. Examinations are generally held at the end of each semester. Students can normally enter for an examination resit once, after which, in certain cases, dispensation may be given for one further resit. Normally a programme of study comprises one major subject (2/3) along with one or more minor subjects.

As a general rule grades are expressed on the 0-10 scale, where the passing grade is 5 and above, or with the assessment pass/fail. Course grades are usually given in increments of 0.5, and averages computed to two decimal places. For most higher institution courses a combined average of 5, or a minimum grade of 5 in each subject is required to pass. In some institutions average grade points are not calculated and in individual courses the minimum grade can be higher than 5. According to regulations in most institutions, a student may sit an examination in a given course twice. When a student's grade-point average is calculated, failing grades (marked F) are not included in the calculation.

In most institutions, studies are divided into study credits (*námseiningar*), 30 credits corresponding to one academic year of full-time studies, 15 credits corresponding to one semester of full-time studies. As a general rule, in other words: **30 (Icelandic) credits equal 60 ECTS credits.**

Some departments have *numerus clausus*.

Icelandic is the language of instruction in higher education institutions in Iceland. However, in some institutions individual courses are taught in English. Some textbooks are in English or another foreign language (mostly German and Scandinavian languages). Teaching methods vary somewhat between programmes and level of study. In most cases there is a combination of lectures, seminars, individual assignments and group work. In technical and science programmes laboratory work and practical training are more prevalent. Increasingly professors integrate the newest information and communication technology with their teaching methods. For example they use specific Web-sites to post course-related material and interact with students on the Internet. Some programmes are offered with distance learning via the internet and/or through video conferencing.

#### Teaching language.

Most courses are taught in Icelandic. Languages are usually taught in the subject language. Some courses are taught in English for exchange students, etc.

Student fee: About 25.000 ikr = about 320 Euro per academic year

#### Finances

In 1998 the University of Iceland made an agreement with the government/ Ministry of Finance on the funding of university teaching and administration based on a mathematical formula. The University of Iceland receives specific funding based on per capita student registration and the evaluation of students' performance (in terms of course credits attempted and/or completed). Other institutes at university level will soon adopt this system (reiknilíkan).

### **1.1.1.Recent changes in the system of higher education**

The new law on higher education was enacted in 1997 and recent changes in the system of higher education are the various institutions offering university degrees and more students studying at postgraduate level. (S.1.1) The changes are coming from the top with the new law and more finance for research.

### **1.1.2. The impact of the Bologna Declaration**

The Icelandic system is, in a way, similar to the model of the Bologna Declaration. See fiórur Kristinsson. Fréttabréf 5.tbl. des 2000. Bologna yfirlit, flitning hennar fyrir starf háskóla.

1.2 Identification of relevant changes in the social, political, cultural, professional and economic environments.

In Iceland, students work in the outside world during their studies. In recent years there has been a great offer of places of work. The universities compete with working life.

In the last ten years, teachers in secondary schools have struck several times. This might influence the drop-out rate but this has not been researched.

In Iceland we have the following system of financial support for students.

There are no tuition fees at state-run institutions of higher education, but the institutions charge registration fees. Privately run colleges charge tuition fees.

Icelandic students attending institutions of higher education are eligible for student loans from the Icelandic Student Loan Fund. The total loan received per annum depends upon the income of the student (and his/her spouse, as appropriate). Repayments commence two years after completion or discontinuation of studies.

Individuals from EU member states and the EFTA countries, who have worked in Iceland at their trade or profession for at least one year, are entitled to apply for a student loan. The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture annually offers a limited number of scholarships to foreign students to pursue studies in Icelandic language and literature at the University of Iceland.

Grants are available for post-graduate, research-oriented studies at universities in Iceland.

## **LANGUAGE DEGREE PROGRAMMES**

### **2. Innovations in language degree programmes offered by universities**

#### **2.1. Traditional language programmes**

The traditional language programmes are in the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Iceland. The Faculty of Humanities is the largest of the University faculties and covers all the major fields in the humanities. The Faculty is divided into eight departments:

Icelandic Language and Literature

History

Philosophy

Comparative Literature and Linguistics

English

German and Nordic Languages (German, Danish, Swedish, Finnish, Norwegian)

Roman and Slavic Languages (Greek, Italian, Latin, Russian, Spanish, French)

Icelandic for Foreign Students

#### 2.1.1 Content, objectives and structures of programmes

The Faculty offers three-year B.A. programmes in 17 subjects. In many subjects, students may elect to take the entire three-year B.A. programme in a single major subject, or they may pursue two years in their major field and one year in a minor field. In Finnish, Greek, Italian, Latin, Norwegian, Russian, Spanish, and Swedish only the latter (major/minor) option is possible. A thesis is required for graduation in all fields. Students from other faculties may take a one-year minor programme in the subjects listed above, if permitted by their major faculty. A special three-year programme is offered in Icelandic for Foreign Students leading to the B.Ph.Isl. degree. New students with some prior knowledge of Icelandic may move directly into the second year by passing examinations held in September. The first semester is taught largely in English, although the principal textbooks are in Icelandic.

#### Programme of study

B.A. Degree. Bachelor degree

Within the Faculty of Arts, 93 credits of study are required for the B.A. degree, 3 of which are awarded for a compulsory course in philosophy. The degree is normally completed in three years, with students taking 30 credits each year. With regards to English/Danish/German/French, a student has three possible degree options:

1. English /Danish/German/French as a minor subject (30 credits, 60 ECTS). Successful completion of the first-year programme is, at present, the only option for a student who wishes to obtain a minor in English;
2. English/Danish/German/French as a major subject I (60 credits, 120 ECTS). This comprises the successful completion of the first-year programme plus 30 credits made up from second- and third-year compulsory and elective courses;
3. English/ Danish/German/French as a major subject II (90 credits). This option is an extension of the above, which allows a student to take a further 30 credits in English Danish/German/French.

For the Greek, Italian, Latin, Russian, and Spanish languages, the students can take 30 credits or 60 credits.

Language programmes should offer students knowledge in language skill, linguistics, literature and cultural studies. In Iceland there are no special programmes in cultural studies. They are included in the language programmes.

#### Postgraduate Degree Programmes

A M.A. degree requiring two to three years of postgraduate study and a dissertation, is offered in English and Danish languages. There is a two-year joint M.Paed. degree programme in English and Danish. The B.Phil.Isl. degree (Baccalaureatus Philologiae Islandicae) is awarded after completion of the programme in Icelandic for foreign students. This degree is on the same level as the BA degree.

The programmes usually cover three main areas: language, literature and cultural studies. Language subjects typically include grammar, phonetics, translation and written and oral proficiency courses. If the language is not a school subject - Russian, Italian, etc, they usually offer intensive courses in the first year. Literature courses typically include literary analysis, theory and history.

Figures showing language student numbers at the University of Iceland

**Academic year 1989-1990**

Total at the University 4,638 students female 2,517 male 2,121  
 Faculty of Humanities 1,070 female 700 male 370

**Academic year 1993-1994**

Total HÍ 5,364 female 3,011 male 2,353  
 Faculty of Humanities 1,195 female 783 male 412

The figures for Languages 1993-1994 are as follow

Subject	Female	male	total students
English	90	32	122
Italian	13	0	13
Greek/Latin	5	3	8
Swedish	12	2	14
Russian	9	8	17
Spanish	35	3	38
Danish	34	2	36
French	71	9	80
Finnish	0	2	2
Norwegian	0	7	7
German	9	58	67

**Academic year 1996-1997**

Total HÍ 5,826 female 3,299 male 2,525  
 Faculty of Humanities 1,246 female 800 male 444

The figures for Languages 1996-1997 are as follow

Subject	female	male	total students
English	79	50	129

Italian	--	--	not taught
Greek/Latin	5	5	10
Swedish	13	0	13
Russian	12	14	26
Spanish	35	3	38
Danish	21	2	23
French	63	6	69
Finnish	0	4	4
Norwegian	1	7	8
German	66	11	77

**Academic year 2000-2001**

Total HÍ 6,773  
Faculty of Humanities 1,210

female 4,124 male 2,646  
female 800 male 410

The figures for Languages 2000-2001 are as follow

Subject	Female	Male	total students
English	92	33	125
Italian	24	7	31
Greek/Latin	5	4	9
Swedish	9	0	9
Russian	1	8	9
Spanish	38	7	45
Danish	29	3	32
French	35	5	40
Finnish	2	2	4
Norwegian	3	1	4
German	34	8	42

#### 2.1.2. Career prospects for graduates

There are no statistics about careers for graduates in Iceland. Students of languages pursue a career in teaching, tourism, travel agencies, translations, public administration, media, publishing. A minority becomes teachers.

#### 2.1.3. Recent changes in content, objectives and/or structure of programmes see 2.2

#### 2.1.4. Examples of good practice

It is impossible to give examples of good practice, when only two institutions are working in this field. See Introduction.

#### 2.1.5 Reasons underlying these changes

#### 2.1.6. Identification of needs

Research on careers

Better salary for teachers

Better Image for language studies

P.R. at secondary school-level for the choice of languages

Scholarships designed for language teachers

#### 2.1.6.1.

Need to improve the standard of language skills before entering language programmes  
Cooperation with secondary schools

#### 2.1.6.2.

Need for language teachers  
Improve the wages for language teachers  
More research on languages

2.1.7. Measures to be taken at institutional, regional, national and European level to meet the needs identified.

## **2.2. Alternative programmes**

### 2.2.1 Content, objectives, and structure of programmes

In Iceland, an alternative programme “Applied Language Studies” was founded 1999 for English, Spanish, German and Danish. The programme is 30 units (60 ECTS), planned to be taken in one year, or Diploma 45 units (90 ECTS). The purpose is to offer a programme for students studying other subjects to improve their language skills. In German and Danish the university did not get enough students. In English and Spanish small groups started this programme. Some of the units are taken with the traditional language programmes.

### 2.2.2 Career prospects for the graduates

Business, tourism, administration

### 2.2.3. Recent changes in content, objectives, and/or structure of programmes

The programmes are new. See 2.2.1

### 2.2.4. Examples of good practice

The Multimedia Language Centre at the University of Iceland (Tungumálamiðstöð Háskóla Íslands) might be an example.

The centre offers self-access programs in 5 FL: Danish, English, French, German and Spanish. The prerequisite: 2 years study in the language at secondary level (no beginners). Guided self-study: The tutor plays a fundamental role in the programmes (a guide). Learners keep a diary on their self-study and the interaction between learner and tutor is very important. The aims are fixed at the beginning by the tutor, but the learner is free to choose the way he takes to reach those aims. The learner’s proficiency compared to the fixed aims, is evaluated (oral and written productions).

The courses are learner-centred: freedom and responsibility! The learner (guided by the tutor) selects the material, the time, the rhythm and the methods. He has free access to tutors whenever he wants: interview and e-mail (few students=personal contact).

The courses are practical and the emphasis is on comprehension and expression: (communicative approach). They are designed for students who want to learn FL for practical purposes (further studies in a foreign country is common in Iceland). Oral and written expression is obtained through active participation in small conversational groups (talkshops) with a tutor and through report writing, while oral and written comprehension is obtained through the self-study part.

The programmes are divided into two semesters: 1. Sem: structured and directed by the tutor quite closely, 2. Sem: more individualized and based on research oriented tasks including data collection, thematical investigation, conclusion drawing and finally the production of presentable texts (Forum Islandiae).

Emphasis is on self-reliance and an interactive feedback functioning relationship between the learner and the tutor through the use of technology (e-mail and websites).

#### 2.2.6. Identification of needs

Educate teachers of languages for special purposes

Teaching material

Research on languages and languages for special purposes

#### 2.2.7 Measures to be taken at institutional, regional, national and European level to meet the needs identified

Curriculum –cooperation

Teacher-exchanges

Research

### **3. Innovations in the training of language teachers**

#### 3.1 Language teaching and learning in primary and secondary school education

The state primary and lower secondary school is called "grunnskóli" in Iceland and the pupils are in the age range of 7-15/16. All schools offer English from the 5<sup>th</sup> year and Danish from the 7<sup>th</sup> year. English and Danish are compulsory for the pupils. (Until 2000, Danish was the first foreign language). In the state upper secondary-level schools "menntaskóli" or "fjölbrautarskóli" the pupils can choose French, Spanish or German. At the age of 19/20 the pupils leave secondary level with the so called "stúdentspróf"

#### 3.2. Initial teacher training

##### 3.2.1 Institutions responsible for training

The University of Iceland and the Iceland University of Education are responsible for training.

##### 3.2.2 Content, objectives and structure of the programmes

The University of Iceland is changing the programme. This information might change in 2001. The Teachers Certificate Programme consists of 30 (60 ECTS). The studies may be completed in one winter following the BA or BS degree. For languages it is the BA degree. The studies can also be spread over two years, in which case 60 cr. must have been completed in the major before beginning the programme.

Accreditation as a teacher at primary and secondary level requires at least a BA or BS degree and 30 cr. in education science for a total of 120 cr (240 ECTS).

3 years Language subject 1 year didactics

Programme studies are both academic and practical. All courses emphasize the practical experience of schoolwork. Instruction is in the hands of the permanent teaching staff and sessional lecturers as well as teachers at primary and secondary level.

From 2000, there is the possibility of taking M.Ed in the Icelandic, English and Danish languages. It is postgraduate level. The programmes are 90 ECTS - 60 ECTS in the language subject and 30 ECTS in the teachers certificate programme.

#### Iceland University of Education

Teacher education in Iceland has a history going back for more than a century and leading up to the foundation of the Iceland University of Education. The university now operates on the basis of legislation dating from 1997 when three other colleges

were merged with the former University College of Education. These were the Icelandic College of Early Childhood Education, the College for Developmental Therapists and the College of Physical Education at Laugarvatn. The college operates according to laws 137/1997 that were passed by parliament in 1997.

The Iceland University of Education has two departments, the Department of Undergraduate Studies with five divisions and the Department of Graduate Studies. A relatively large Institute of Continuing Education operates within the university.

### Undergraduate Studies

The Department of Undergraduate Studies includes five divisions: Division of Early Childhood Education, Division of Primary and Lower Secondary Education, Division of Upper Secondary Education, Division of Sport and Physical Education and Division of Developmental Therapy. Most programmes are offered both as a full time residency programme and by distance education. Four of these divisions offer three-year programmes, 90 units (180 ECTS), leading to a B.Ed.-degree. The after-degree programme offered by the Division of Upper Secondary Education is a two-year programme, 30 units (60 ECTS). The students who finish that programme receive a Diploma/Certificate.

In the Division of Primary and Lower Secondary Education students are offered a choice of fifteen subject specializations: Art Education, Craft Design and Technology, Danish as a foreign language, English as a foreign language, Geography, Home Economics, Icelandic, Life Sciences, Mathematics, Physical Education and Sports, Physics and Chemistry, Social Studies and History, Religion, Textiles and Music.

More than 1100 students are enrolled in the five undergraduate programmes.

### Student Teaching/Field Practice

Field practice and student teaching are an important part of the professional programmes at the Iceland University of Education. Teacher Education students visit and teach classes at all levels and students in Developmental Therapy work with institutes where such services are needed.

### Graduate Studies

The postgraduate programme offers courses from 15 to 60 units (30-120 ECTS) for professionals in education and social work. Study at this level is largely organised as distance education, though there are periods that require residency.

Postgraduate students can finish with a diploma in Education after 15-30 units (30-60 ECTS) or with an M.Ed.-degree after 60 units (120 ECTS). Graduate students specialize in different fields, like administration, curriculum and instruction, education theory, special education or educational technology.

Some 400 students are enrolled at postgraduate level at the Iceland University of Education.

## 3.3 Continuing teacher education

3.3.1. Continuing Education for language teachers is at two institutions (Endurmenntun í Kennaraháskólanum og Endurmenntunarstofnun Háskóla Íslands). Responsibility for the pre-school teachers is with Kennaraháskóli, and for the teachers at the secondary school it is with Endurmenntunarstofnun HÍ (the same institution as mentioned in 6.)

The main purpose of the Institutions of Continuing Education at the Iceland University of Education is to provide continuing education for professionals in education and social work. The Institute holds courses of varying length all over the country, but special emphasis is also placed on distance learning and the use of information technology. The work of the Institute is closely connected to other work in the university.

In cooperation with the Teachers associations, very many courses are organised in Iceland and abroad. These courses are approved by the Ministry of Education and are given financial support.

STÍL is the name of the language teachers organisation, and every language has a teachers association.

### 3.3.2. Content, objective and structure of programmes

The content of these programmes is varied, and in recent years Multimedia and new media in the teaching of foreign languages are of great interest.

### 3.3.3. Recent changes in content, objectives and/or structure of programmes

Until Spring 2001, the teachers got credits for joining continuing education courses but this has now been changed.

## **4. Innovation in the training of translators and interpreters**

In Iceland there has not been training for translators and interpreters. In each language there have been some courses in practising translation. Now there is a discussion to start a new programme. This is a description of the programme but N.B. it has not started yet.

### Master's Programme in Translation at the University of Iceland

The proposed Master's programme at the Faculty of Humanities has been conceived of as a one year programme, with two semesters of courses and a final dissertation to be written during the summer months. All in all, the programme consists of 45 units (30 in courses and 15 for the diss.) which amounts to 90 ECTS.

To be able to enrol, students must have finished a B.A. degree or its equivalent in a foreign language or, alternatively, Icelandic. Prospective students must have finished with a first, i.e. at least 7.25 on average on a scale of 1-10.

The courses are divided between a) philological courses in language and culture with a focus on translation, b) courses in translation theory and finally c) the dissertation, which in many cases will consist of a translation and a detailed theoretical commentary. An alternative for the dissertation may be a translation critique or an exercise in pure theory.

a) There are roughly two categories of students with regards to the philological courses in language and culture, those with a B.A. in a foreign language and those with a B.A. in Icelandic. For students with a B.A. in a foreign language (at least 60 units/120 ECTS) the philological courses will be in the native language, Icelandic. For students with a B.A. in Icelandic the philological courses will be in one foreign language. These courses make up one third of the programme and add up to 15 units (30 ECTS) altogether.

b) Courses in translation theory make up one third of the programme and also add up to 15 units (30 ECTS). It will be possible to take some of these within the philological departments.

c) The final dissertation makes up the last part and amounts to 15 units (30 ECTS).

This is a sketch of the possible route; it is also foreseen that people with different backgrounds and excellent command of languages and different cultures may be given the opportunity to take entrance examinations for the programme. Thus an Icelandic philosopher or engineer, who has studied abroad may be given the opportunity to make use of his or her linguistic and cultural knowledge, in addition to their specialised expertise.

Since work on this programme is still in progress, it may turn out a little different from the above conception, e.g. as a two year programme with 45 units in courses and a 15 unit dissertation. A possibility might be to demand 15 units in translation studies at a foreign university. These possibilities as well as the above programme will be discussed in the

coming months at the University of Iceland. (Information from Gauti Kristmannsson, spring 2001)

There are now some courses in translating and in each language subject.

#### 4.8 Identification of needs

The area of translation and interpreting is underdeveloped in Iceland and there is need for study in this field.

### **Provision for students of other Disciplines**

#### 5. Innovation in language provision for students of other disciplines

See 5.1.1

##### 5.1. Language studies integrated into non-language programmes

###### 5.1.1. Content, objectives, and structures of programmes

At the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, students can focus on Business-Languages – English/French/German/Danish/Spanish, 12 credits 24 ECTS. These are applied courses, focusing on developing students' confidence and fluency in the languages. The goal is to use correct grammar, gain fluency in speaking and writing, build an effective business vocabulary, and use and recognize appropriate business communication formats. Students write memos, letters, resumés, and proposals, in addition to delivering oral presentations. Furthermore, the team assignments should build a repertoire of successful group management skills as well as conflict management strategies especially aimed at intercultural groups. Students write business letters, memos and reports, in addition to conducting interviews, facilitating discussions and giving oral presentations, both individually and in teams. The language courses focus on the practical aspects of doing business in an international environment.

###### 5.1.2. Recent changes in content, objectives and/or structure of programmes

These programmes are very new. see 5.1.1

###### 5.1.3 Examples of good practice

Cooperation with the Language Centre at the University of Iceland

###### 5.1.4 Reasons underlying these changes

###### 5.1.5. Identification of needs.

Teachers of languages for special purposes

Teaching-material

Curriculum for languages for special purposes

###### 5.1.5.1. not applicable

###### 5.1.5.2. not applicable

###### 5.1.6. Measures to be taken at institutional, regional, national, and European level to meet the needs identified

5.1.6.1. At first-degree level  
see 5.1.6.2.

5.1.6.2. At postgraduate level

Institutions could consider greater cross-faculty flexibility. Interdisciplinary initiatives involving languages.

5.2. General and subject-oriented language courses accompanying non-language programmes

At the English department there are two courses

English for Special Purposes: Business English (5 ECTS) and English for Special Purposes: Legal English (5 ECTS)

5.2.1. Contents, objectives, and structures of programmes  
not applicable

5.2.2. Recent changes in content, objectives and/or structure of programmes  
not applicable

5.2.3 Examples of good practice: not applicable

5.2.4. Reasons underlying these changes: not applicable

5.2.5. Identification of needs: not applicable

5.2.6. Measures to be taken at institutional, regional, national, and European level to meet the needs identified: not applicable

5.3. Language provision and support for mobile students

5.3.1 For incoming students

Very many courses at university are in Icelandic and therefore international students mainly study courses relating to Icelandic or to English and Danish, though many also enrol in physical education and the arts. Students coming from abroad are offered a four-week intensive course in Icelandic before they begin their studies. A four-week intensive course held in August. This course is an elementary course for beginners, altogether 70 hours, and is specially meant for students attending other subjects than the degree programme in Icelandic for foreign students. All students can apply but exchange students have priority to attend the course. (Price 35.000)

A special representative provides information on the international projects and programmes in which the Iceland University of Education is involved. This representative arranges visits by guests from abroad and accepts applications from international students, assists them in planning their study and provides support during their stay, including assistance in finding suitable housing.

The students have the opportunity to write in English or another language, if they make arrangements with the teacher.

The Iceland University of Education is a partner in the Office of International Education which is run by Icelandic universities to facilitate international relations and exchange for students and faculty. The office runs a special bureau that provides information on studies abroad at all university levels ([www.ask.hi.is/eng/](http://www.ask.hi.is/eng/)).

## **International Cooperation**

The Universities in Iceland are partners in many international programmes and have arranged for special cooperation with a number of institutions abroad. Such cooperation includes student and faculty exchange which has become more and more frequent in recent years. The Nordplus Plan for Nordic cooperation in education and research and the Erasmus Plan for cooperation among European universities have been instrumental in strengthening contacts with colleagues and institutions in other countries.

### 5.3.2. For outgoing students

Students at the universities in Iceland can elect to pursue part of their studies at universities abroad. SOKRATES, Nordplus etc. Non language-students get support for learning the language.

In some languages there are language tests.

### 5.4. Non-language programmes or parts of programmes taught through one or several other languages

5.4.1 Faculty of Theology, Faculty of law, Faculty of economics and business administration, Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of natural sciences, Faculty of social sciences

5.4.2. First degree level, at postgraduate level

5.4.3. Language used

English

5.4.4. Target groups

Mobile students, SOKRATES students, ERASMUS students, Nordplus-students. Students of Icelandic (first fall)

5.4.5. Policies and objectives underlying the practice described

5.4.6 New measures proposed

not applicable

## **CONTINUING EDUCATION**

### **6. Innovations in language studies in continuing education (excluding languages specialists)**

The main target group in Continuing Education is the general interest market, and it is very important. These courses are usually taught in the evening after the normal working day is over. Endurmenntunarsstofnun Institute of Continuing Education is part of the university.

6.1. Target groups

People in work who wish to improve their educational qualifications possibly for reasons of career development.

6.2 The main aim of Continuing Education courses is to teach languages at all levels, from ab initio to advanced, so as to impart skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening.

6.3 Recent developments

A course in Freiburg, Germany in 1999 and 2000, was a new idea and was very good. This year a course will be held in Montpellier, France.

The University of Iceland's summer programmes at the Institute of Continuing Education are now in their sixth year, and steadily growing in enrollment and reputation. This Summer (2001) they offer a new 3-week programme in Icelandic Sagas (for foreigners).

6.4 Identification of new needs  
see 6.5.

6.5 Measures proposed to meet the needs identified  
Market research is required.