

# SFI/SAS G Business Sweden

Language Training



## Good Practice Executive Summary

ABF Vux is one of "Vuxenutbildningsförvaltningen in Göteborg's" suppliers of education for adults. ABF Vux's main activity is to accomplish education for those who lack a full upper secondary education. In Sweden all persons, including grown-ups, have the right to study 9 years in a nine-year compulsory school plus 3 year in upper secondary school (gymnasium).

Those persons who are immigrants in our country have their legal right to study in SFI (Swedish tuition for immigrants), until they reached a certain level of language skills in understanding, speaking and writing. The SFI-studies is grouping in 4 levels starting from A up to D-level. The lower levels are also indicating a lower school-background from their home-countries. The students could study Swedish around 15 hours/week and after a certain amount of time their skills are evaluated and they might be ready to continue on a higher level.

The next level to study after you have passed the D-level in the SFI-studies is in the compulsory (9-year) school and this language studies is SAS G which is short for -Swedish As Second Ground-level.

The SFI/SAS Business-programme started in January 2007 with students who were approved from the authorities which means Vuxenutbildningen (VUX), to enter into this program. Under Swedish law, has the lacking of Swedish language, given everyone the right to enter the Swedish school system in order to learn a basic level of Swedish language.

The goal for the SFI/SAS Business-programme is to encourage a good development and progression of the language. Further goals for this programme are to strengthen the students professional skill in trade, commerce and entrepreneurship plus good knowledge in how the Swedish business-culture works.

Since the programme started in 2007 122 students have passed their examination in the Swedish language. 70 % of the students have also successfully passed their exams in the trade and economic subjects. The challenging goal for this programme has been to support the students to pass examination in those subjects where they were not supposed to have enough language knowledge to reach the higher marks.

The language learning and all the subjects are following the governmental plan for each subject, and the authority have therefore the rights and possibilities to study and inspect the results, as often as they want.

The programme runs entirely on governmental economic support since it is possible to have this language tuition for everyone that will enter the SFI-studies. Since this programme is running under governmental control, all marks and reports from the pedagogic and didactic framework is official.

### ***Based upon coherent and up-to-date needs analysis***

The SFI/SAS Business programme has its background in the efforts to adapt an general education to match aspects from the Swedish trade and economy market. With the 8 weeks of work as a trainee the participants have a good possibility to show their competence to a future employer and on the other hand the employer to be has an invaluable possibility to evaluate the trainee.

### ***Focused on the acquisition of competencies identified on needs analysis***

The trainers are the best trainers or teachers that can specifically match the language and economic training. The training respond to general employer needs and the material used in the training is supervised by the authorities.

### ***Objectives are realistic***

The goals are realistic especially with the support is included in the programme.

***Based on updated didactic framework***

The trainers are fully qualified since they are qualified teachers both to the language training and to the economic subjects. The trainers are regularly attending different didactic development-programme in the school.

***Incorporates an element of retroaction***

Elements of review and evaluation are normal day-to-day work integrated in the education.

***Takes restraint into account***

One of our main goals for the school -ABF Vux, is to take into consideration the different learning styles that can influence the learning capacity on the individual. And furthermore if the individual has any physical or psychological obstacle to fully attending the programme we have possibilities to give support. Parts of the programme can also be found in our intranet.

## 1. Description & Objectives of Programme

The SFI Business programme has been going on from 2007 until now 2009 and is still running. Every student has the choice to go for 1 or 2 terms which totally is 38 weeks, 18 plus 20 weeks.

The SFI Business programme is based on the possibility for the individual to make choice of his or her own. The approach is individual.

The programme is supported and is part of the official education system in Sweden. This means that the community in Goteborg has to approve for the start of the programme. The adult education is also purchasing from different organisations which work on timebased contracts. That means that this programme can go on as long as ABF Vux has a contract with Vuxenutbildningen (VUF) and that has to be in new purchasing agreement every 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year. Since this programme is approved by VUF the community takes the costs. Since the programme is running on contract from the community the cost of this education is in the agreement that ABF Vux has with the community. The education of different SFI-programme is free of costs for the individual and the self-financing is possible with support from the social welfare. When the studies are on a higher level, e.g. upper secondary level, the individual has to borrow from the state. This is possible as long as the progress of his/hers learning goes on in a approved way.

The programme is innovative from a number of perspectives. The possibility to study on a higher level, this is not the normal case since. To study on the upper secondary level you are supposed to have finished your studies on the SFI-programme. This means that your Swedish language knowledge should be on an adequate level and not the much lower SFI-level. The language training

which is interacting with the other subjects, is also different from how it normally is running.

## 2. EU Policy the Training Implements

Some of the EU policies that the SFI/SAS G Business programme will ensure are the provision of the necessary skills and qualifications for the world of work and it will also promote life-long learning and learner mobility. Further on the SFI/SAS G Business programme will support several goals in the Life-long learning programme, such as promoting a great variety of language knowledge and language learning, giving a wider group of persons access to the modern skills in the labour market and thereby to reaching an employment.

The SFI/SAS G Business programme has as a main factor to shorten the way for individual to reach the labour market. This programme has focus on language-learning for the immigrants in Goteborg that have Swedish as a second-language. As the persons in the program already speak another language as a first language, their knowledge of a second language should be of great value for our, and Europe's as well, labour market. We are already dealing with world-wide global labour market and the knowledge of small "non commercial" language should in the future be of great impact. For example Europe have already realised the advantage of speaking and "writing" Chinese i.e. mandarin, even though China has not been a big commercial market for very long.

The SFI/SAS G Business programme is an education programme that is free for the citizens in Goteborg. And the persons who are accepted to start in that programme wants to start working in Sweden in the first place, but many of them also indicates that are prepare to move elsewhere, as long as there is a good working possibility to be find. Education is the way to get a job!

The organisations that are instrumental in delivering this are ABF Vux and VUF. VUF is head of all adult education in Goteborg and are also over-viewing the implementation and the outcome/result.

In the programme of totally 38 weeks there are 7 to 8 weeks of job experience included. During this period the employer have a good possibility to contribute to the education.

### **3. Main target groups, numbers targetted and trained**

This SFI/SAS Business-programme is supporting those migrants and immigrants that are living in the municipality of Göteborg. The programme is targeting at reducing the Swedish second-language students way in learning Swedish. That means the shorter time they will spend in school the quicker they will be tax-paying members of the society. The main target group is those of poor Swedish that want to work in the business field in Sweden, either with starting up a company of their own or as employed.

We have had 122 persons during 2007 and 2008 plus spring 2009, that have finished the programme. This means that they have all finished their studies at SFI-programme and another 50% have finished the compulsory (the comprehensive -9 year) school SAS G, which means that they can start regular studies at upper secondary (adult) level. And those that want to continue their studies at university level don't have so many subjects to complete their qualifications. Considering the outcome of the economic subjects, that were on upper secondary level, have 70% of the accepted participants passed. Our targetted groups include unemployed, women, migrants and others mainly immigrants. The share of women in our groups are about 65 -70%.

#### 4. Targetted Levels & Competencies based on CEFRL

*Not applicable*

#### 5. Length of Training

The numbers of hours of language-training on the SFI –level are usually around 13 hours hours/week and including 2 hours independent work in a study-hall the students can sometimes come up to 15 hours language training per week. All SFI-students in Sweden are supposed to go to school as much as 15 hours/week. In the normal SFI-studies the difference is that you cannot continue your studies after you have used a certain amount of hours. How many hours language training everyone use to reach the next level, is very individual and depend on background, school-results etc. The students in the SFI Business-programme have normally a much quicker study tempo, compare to other groups, and passed their levels in a shorter time.

When the students have passed their SFI-level and can start to study on the SAS ground-level in the 9-year comprehensive school, they can in this programme have the same amount of studying hours per week. Many of them have been able to pass the ground level within the fixed time for the SFI/SAS G Business programme and that is around 38 weeks. But now the students also have parts of a upper secondary education to add to their marks in Swedish language.

The big advantage of this programme is the possibility for the students to both reach their targeted levels in language training and to get marks in the economic and trade subjects.

The question whether it is possible to improve the length of the training programme, should in this programme mean to shorten it. The interesting question in this area is if we could put in more work-place training in the

programme which is what the authorities want us to do. The adult education authorities in Sweden want to expand the length of the work-place training in all SFI programmes and of course also SFI/SAS G Business. We don't want to reduce the face-to-face training in the classroom with the teachers.

## 6. Quality Assurance of Training

The authorities in Goteborg, Vuxenutbildningsförvaltningen VUF, are ultimately responsible for the quality assurance of the adult secondary education. Vuxenutbildningsförvaltningen is also responsible for monitoring the quality in the training. But as a provider of education for the administration, ABF Vux company has own quality responsibility.

If you want to study as an adult in Goteborg and are admitted to start your studies, from whatever level you have, very low or up to post-secondary programme, you are under control from the public administration. This means that all education will continuously be supervised of the VUF. The public administration has full control. They are in charge of the recruitment from start and they check all the education providers during the education time. They are also the official authority to which the students can make reclaims if there is anything that they want to complain about.

The ABF Vux has this year started with a quality control system of their own "BRUK". This is a quality system that the Swedish board of education has recommended and contain 4 elements with the same quality method as the Japanese quality circles. It has yet only started and the implementation is going on.

Feedback from employers are generated in different ways. In the programme 6 to 8 weeks of work placement is included, and at all the trainee posts the students can match their education to the needs of the labour market. The

teachers are visiting every trainee post and meeting and talking to the employer in that working place. During the programme the students are visiting different work-places for making reports and interviews and that gives a good knowledge of the needs in the labour market.

The material that is used in SFI/SAS G Business is literature that has been written specially to match the rules and goals of each subject including the language learning. If this wouldn't be the fact the students would fail in their exams and this is not the case.

## 7. Sustainability Options

This project is based on how you can develop language-learning for the immigrants in Goteborg that have Swedish as a second-language.

One of the key aims of this project is to prove that the learning of a new language for grown-ups, will give a better result if the students can see useful goals of the studies.

In this case there are several goals; we want prove that the combination of learning language with learning a subject that is of interest for the student, will increase the motivation and reduce the learning time. We wanted also to emphasize that in educating second-language speaking students, empowerment instead of lack of language-knowledge, is very successful.

## 8. Transferability assessment

### 8.1. Evidence of transfer

This programme is possible to transfer to the whole of Sweden, Scandinavia and perhaps to part of Europe. The critical part is that it is based on a public

education system that will finance parts of the costs of the second language learning.

### **8.2. Innovation**

The innovative aspect is regarding the method of this programme. By studying courses that are specific to a profession the language-learning becomes possible on a level where a student doesn't have the satisfactory language-skills.

The participants realise the added bonus of combining language-training with learning a specific subject.

There is also an innovative aspect due to the collaboration between the trainers is it going on beyond their subjects, the students learning period is obviously reduced. The teaching is integrated between the subjects.

The schedule or time-table should also be made so there is a possibility to focus on the "red thread" in the language and subject training.

### **8.3. Dependence on political context**

There is definitely a political context to accept to this programme. There must be a political will to promote integration and fasten up the way to get a proper job and reduce the feeling of alienation.

### **8.4. Flexibility**

*Not applicable*

### **8.5. Multi-region transfer**

Can not see why this programme could not be multi-regional transfer? The limit should only be of political reasons.