

Instructions for the Centre for Statistics

§1: Definition and mission

The Centre for Statistics (Swedish equivalent: Centrum för statistik) is a centre for applied statistics. The Centre's current work focuses on statistical support and consultation for research students and other SLU staff. The acronym of this centre is Statistics@SLU (in Swedish pronounced as "Statistik vid SLU"). The English acronym is mostly used in day-to-day communication.

Statistics@SLU will contribute to quality assurance of research at SLU through statistical support and consultation. Consultation work is complemented by statistical workshops for applied researchers and other information (cf. §6).

§2: Statistical consultants and network

Statistics@SLU is comprised for the most part of professional statisticians acting as consultants among other things (here described as statistical consultants). Clients are SLU staff that seek consultation. The statistical consultants in the Centre will interact with the wider statistical network at SLU. The statistical consultants meet at least once a year.

§3: Structure of Statistics@SLU

The centre has a director (föreståndare), a deputy director and as many statistical consultants as there are funds. Each of the three major SLU campuses, Alnarp, Ultuna and Umeå¹ host a support and consultation unit of Statistics@SLU responsible for local statistical support and consultation.

§4: Director and deputy director

The director of Statistics@SLU is responsible for the Centre in general and specifically for its administration, management and representation. Minor decisions regarding the Centre are taken by the director and s/he is assisted by the deputy director. The director quarterly collects and summarises information regarding consultation activities and organises meetings with members and the steering committee. The director also prepares the budget (cf. §5) of the Centre each year in autumn. The director and his/her deputy should represent different campuses for a better coordination and integration of the statistical consultation work.

§5: Funding and budget

Statistics@SLU is funded by SLU's central administration through the Faculty of Forest Sciences. The funding is shared between the aforementioned three major campuses according to the local demand for statistical support (cf. §6) and consultation. Administration costs are also paid for from this budget.

¹ Researchers from other campuses contact the consultation unit at the campus nearest to them and/or use the Centre's website for contact information.

§6: Consultations

Any researcher at SLU is eligible for free statistical support and consultation up to 20 hours per person and year subject to the availability of consultants². Clients can contact the consultants at their campus through the Centre's website or directly by email or telephone. Consultation and support is provided according to the principle of "first come first served" unless special and clearly defined circumstances make alternative prioritisations necessary. Consultants are required to maintain a detailed documentation of their consultations (name of client, affiliation, contact email, number of hours), which needs to be submitted to the director for reimbursement³. Consultant work is summarized four times a year (submission of documentation in March, June, September and December).

§7: Education

BSc/MSc and PhD education is currently not covered by the Centre's budget and therefore is not part of the remit of Statistics@SLU. However, many members of Statistics@SLU are involved in teaching and also provide statistical support to BSc/MSc thesis work funded by sources for basic education.

§8: Other statistical support, website and communication

To a limited extent Statistics@SLU also provide additional support complementing consultations. This support is provided as FAQ documents, SAS/R scripts, short manuals, workshops etc. and disseminated through the website of the Centre⁴. The main purpose of the Centre's website is communication and the dissemination of information. As part of the latter, the website also disseminates statistical support. The website offers detailed contact information to ensure quick access to Statistics@SLU.

§9: Competence development

During the annual meetings of the members of Statistics@SLU, options for competence development, upcoming conferences and workshops are discussed. The director oversees the support of competence development as much as possible. The directors and the steering committee also discuss and follow up the employment strategy and staff planning of statisticians with the deans and the vice-chancellor.

² Additional need for consultation can be satisfied by involving consultants as co-authors of research papers and/or as paid project partners in research projects.

³ Currently the consultation fee is SEK 1000 per hour irrespective of the academic rank and salary of the consultant. For every three hours of consultation one additional "free" hour is funded by Statistics@SLU as an incentive for personal research.

⁴ Some of this effort is funded by other funding bodies.