

## Board meeting

<b>Date</b>	<b>March 9<sup>th</sup> 2020</b>
<b>Time</b>	<b>3½ hour (13:30-17:00)</b>
<b>Place</b>	<b>Sjóvinnuhúsið room 507</b>
<b>Participants</b>	<p><b><u>Board Members</u></b>  <b>Ólavur Ellefsen, Chair of the Board</b>  <b>Marita Rasmussen, Vice-Chair of the Board</b>  <b>Guðrún Nordal, Board Member</b>  <b>Sára Joensen, Board Member</b>  <b>Svein-Ole Mikalsen, Board Member</b>  <b>Magnus Steinsson við Streym, Student Board Member</b>  <b>Martin Zachariassen, Deputy Board Member</b>  <b>Heidi Poulsen, Deputy Board Member</b></p> <p><b><u>Attending</u></b>  <b>Chik Collins, Rector</b>  <b>Johan Hansen, University Director</b></p> <p><b><u>Apologies received:</u></b>  <b>Anders Bjarklev, Board member</b>  <b>Vár í Ólavsstovu, Deputy Board member</b>  <b>Annika Smith, Deputy Board member</b>  <b>Durith í Homrum, Student Board Member</b>  <b>Hans Pauli Strøm, Deputy Board member</b>  <b>Hans Harryson, Deputy Board member</b></p> <p><b>The University's Head of Finance was on sick leave and unable to attend for the relevant section of the first part of the meeting.</b></p> <p><b><u>These participated in the second part of the meeting</u></b>  <b>Bergur Djurhuus Hansen, Pro-Rector</b>  <b>Magni Mohr, Pro-Rector</b>  <b>Brynhild Thomsen, Information Officer</b></p>
<b>Keeper of the minutes</b>	<b>Súsanna Jógvansdóttir Golan</b>

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### **Purpose of the meeting**

- a. To report to the Board on the recent developments in taking the University forward, including:
    - The financial settlement for 2020 and allocation for “quality and strengthening the administration”
    - The consultation process for the Strategic Plan
    - Recent meeting with the Ministry
    - The Faculty of Education.
  - b. To report to the Board on new initiatives and plans for the period until July 2020 and to seek views and advice from the Board regarding the above.
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## **Agenda**

### **Part 1**

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Approval of minutes from December 2019
3. Finance Report
4. Rector's Report – Overview of recent developments and plans for the coming period
5. Items raised by student board member
  - Programme documentation
  - Student support services
  - Erasmus participation

### **Part 2**

6. University administration – “strengthening the administration”: University Director
7. Finance: 2019, 2020 and planning for 2021: University Director (in absence of Head of Finance, who was on sick leave)
8. Focus on quality of education: Pro-Rector for Education Quality
9. Research and Enterprise/Innovation Office: Pro-Rector for Research and Enterprise/Innovation
10. Human Resources: Designing and implementing a system of annual review for staff: University Director (in absence of HR Co-Ordinator who was on annual leave)
11. Communication and marketing: University Director and Information Officer

### **Part 1**

#### **1. Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was approved with an added item on the corona/covid-19 virus (the discussion for this is recorded under Item 4, below).

#### **2. Approval of minutes from December 2019**

The minutes from the last Board meeting were approved by all members.

#### **3. Finance Report**

The University Director presented the finance report on behalf of the Finance Director who was absent on sick leave. The year 2019 ended with a substantial and unanticipated surplus. Some of the surplus was used for some important purchases and the remainder was used to pay off some historic debts which were inherited when Granskingardepilin was taken into the University some years ago. The Rector indicated that there would be discussion with the Ministry about how the remaining debt from this source should be dealt with going forward.

The University Director informed that when the Finance Director is back from sick leave it will be further investigated why there was such a substantial surplus in 2019. One possible, at least partial, explanation is overbudgeting of part time teaching.

The Board was presented the following table, showing the final balance after the expenditures described above.



**Figgjarár 2019**  
**Fróðskaparsetur Føroya**  
**Rakstur**

MVG-just:nei Visur:búskett	Roknskapur 2019	Játtan 2019	Avlop 2019	Roknskapur 2018	Játtan 2018	Avlop 2018
11 Lønir v.m.	86.693.693	89.331.000	3%	81.354.028	80.181.000	-1%
14 Keyv av vörum og tænastrum	14.016.749	12.000.000	-17%	13.655.983	11.800.000	-16%
15 Keyv av útbúnaði, netto	1.983.592	1.500.000	-32%	1.568.780	1.500.000	-5%
16 Leiga, viðlíkahald og skattur	7.010.576	8.400.000	17%	7.694.864	8.400.000	8%
19 Ymsar rakstrarútreiðslur	864	0	0%	0	0	0%
21 Söla av vörum og tænastrum	-1.662.676	-1.000.000	66%	-2.077.064	-1.000.000	108%
32 Útvegan av løgu o.ø.	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
52 Tilskot til einstaklingar	49.000	100.000	51%	72.000	100.000	28%
54 Stuðul til annað virksemsi	100.000	0	0%	70.000	0	0%
57 Rentuútreiðslur o.a.	68	0	0%	505	0	0%
63 Vanligar flytingarinntøkur	2.011.100	0	0%	659.708	0	0%
64 Aðrar flytingarinntøkur	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
65 Flytingarinntøkur úr útláningum	-10.000	0	0%	-15.610	0	0%
71 Innanh. flyt. millum almennar stovn. (útr)	74.078	0	0%	106.176	0	0%
72 Flytingar frá landi til kommunur (land)	51.988	0	0%	39.989	0	0%
75 Keyps-mvg	-0	0	0%	-0	0	0%
76 Innanh. flyt. millum almennar stovn. (innt)	-2.300.826	-2.500.000	-8%	-3.933.342	-2.200.000	79%
77 Flyting frá kommununum til landið	-1.729.382	-1.500.000	15%	-1.915.017	-1.500.000	28%
96 Roknskapartøkn.- avstemm.- og skráset. konti	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
<b>Tilsamans</b>	<b>106.288.824</b>	<b>106.331.000</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>97.281.000</b>	<b>97.281.000</b>	<b>0%</b>

It was mentioned that currently a number of costs (cleaning, IT purchases, scientific journal access cost, etc.) are allocated to the central administration budget. Allocating these costs to the faculties based on usage could make sense and make it more clear where these costs come from and give a more accurate picture of the cost of running the central administration budget which currently appears artificially high.

The anticipated salary growth of 2,7% was discussed by members (see picture below, which is the 2020 budget which was approved remotely by the Board in January). The negotiations of Starvsmannafelagið, which is the largest union, have been concluded with the raise as expected. The rest of the unions are still to negotiate, and it is assumed that the other unions will have around the same increase although we cannot be certain of that at this point.

	SSS	SSS	FMD	FMD	SSD	SSD	NVD	NVD	NÁD	NÁD	DHS	DHS	Samlað	Samla	Lønareg	Samla+LR	FLU 2020	Munur
	J 2019	€ 2020	J 2019	€ 2020	2,70%	€ 2020	J 2020											
Útreiðslur	10.788	13.571	9.975	9.690	19.590	20.181	15.355	15.680	22.032	23.887	12.458	12.833	90.198	95.842	2.588	98.429	100.541	2.112
11 Lønir v.m.	10.788	13.571	9.975	9.690	19.590	20.181	15.355	15.680	22.032	23.887	12.458	12.833	90.198	95.842	2.588	98.429	100.541	2.112
14 Keyv av vörum og tænastrum	5.500	6.500	800	800	1.100	1.539	1.100	1.100	2.800	2.800	850	850	12.150	13.589	1.589	13.589	12.000	-1.589
15 Keyv av útbúnaði, netto	400	400	180	100	100	100	100	140	140	80	80	1.000	920	1.500	920	1.500	580	
16 Leiga, viðlíkahald og skattur	6.795	6.795					245	245	50	50			7.090	7.090		7.090	7.000	-90
52 Tilskot til einstaklingar	100	100											100	100		100	100	0
Útreiðslur samanlagt	23.583	27.366	10.955	10.590	20.790	21.820	16.800	17.125	25.022	26.877	13.388	13.763	110.538	117.541	2.588	120.128	121.141	1.013
Inntøkur																		
21 Söla av vörum og tænastrum	-200	-200	-150	-150	-250	-250	-100	-100	-300	-300	-200	-200	-1.200	-1.200		-1.200	-1.200	0
76 Innanh. flyt. millum almennar stovn. (innt)					-2.200	-3.100			-1.500	-1.500			-2.200	-3.100		-3.100	-3.100	0
77 Flyting frá kommununum til landið									-1.800	-1.800			-1.500	-1.500		-1.500	-1.500	0
Inntøkur samanlagt	-200	-200	-150	-150	-2.450	-3.350	-100	-100	-1.800	-1.800	-200	-200	-4.900	-5.800	0	-5.800	-5.800	0
Netto- játtan/ætlan	23.383	27.166	10.805	10.440	18.340	18.470	16.700	17.025	23.222	25.077	13.188	13.563	105.638	111.741	2.588	114.328	115.341	1.013
		3.783		-365		130		325		1.855		375		6.103	6.690			

The Rector then explained the increase in the salary budget for the administration compared to 2019, which comes partly from the money provided by the Ministry for “quality and strengthening the administration”, partly from the return of a member of staff from PhD study abroad and partly from additional strengthening measures being taken in line with the government perspective.



Finally, members raised the question of why the University seems to have been allowed to have debt, but not a surplus, and asked whether that is something to discuss with the Ministry. The Rector was inclined to do so.

#### **4. Rector's Report**

The Rector had circulated a report on developments at the University ahead of the meeting and highlighted some of the main points – including some topics which are discussed under the other items (finances, communication, quality and strengthening the administration).

Regarding the strategy, the Rector updated on how feedback from the consultation process is now being incorporated in the updated strategy draft which the Chair of the Board and the Rector will finalise in the coming period. The most recent draft had been handed out to members prior to the beginning of the meeting. The members were very positive about the strategy.

The Faculty of Education (NÁD) has experienced some challenges for some time. The Rector and other colleagues have addressed it by organising a series of faculty sessions together with an external consultant where challenges are being dealt with. The second session is planned for April. The Rector believed that the session had been a good start for the continued process of establishing professional collaboration and communication within the Faculty. Furthermore, having discussed the future of the Faculty at the Ministry, the Ministry has now indicated that the Faculty will remain within the University and other alternatives have not, and will not, be considered. Members asked what the core issue of the challenge has been. The Rector explained it being a longer disagreement on whether the Faculty should part from the University, dating back to the merger in 2008. The Rector reported that he is sensing a growing trust from the government and other external partners and underlined that it changes how the discussion and work will go forward.

The campus plan is more clearly back on the agenda at the Ministry and the Rector is pushing to get a letter of nomination to join the Board working to progress with the plan.

The Health and Safety Committee and the Collaboration Committee have now been established and reformatted, respectively, and the Rector complimented the Board for the support of wanting the former in particular to happen, especially now that the Health and Safety committee has had the urgency of the corona/covid-19 to address. The committee had an emergency meeting on Friday 6th and again on the morning of this meeting. The Rector stated he was hoping that the University receive information and advice soon from the government, given that perhaps around 2-3% of the Faroese population are connected to the University. The Rector had contacted the Ministry last week to ask if they are going to provide instructions for the University and that if not, the University needs to establish internal guidelines. Therefore, the Rector and the University Director will draft a message today and tomorrow to send out to student and staff, unless clear guidance is received from the Ministry before then. Members discussed how best to communicate this to staff and students and what precautions the University should take. It was further discussed how much information the university can ask from students and staff on travel plans (work related and private) and health conditions, having the data protection law in



mind. It was advised for the university to be aware of all events and be ready to cancel them if necessary and be explicit in the consequent guidelines.

The Rector updated that the University has recently become a member of the NUSCT network (network of universities of small countries and territories: <https://www.nusct.net/>). The members will meet in San Marino in May where the Rector will also go to Bologna to sign Magna Charta Universitatum – Covid-19 situation permitting. The Board members were supportive on this recent cooperation, noting it being a great idea for Setrið to be part of such a network.

Members asked about the possibility of doubling the admission for the nursing program, which had been reported in the news recently. The Rector updated that the challenge with doubling the entry intake is that there are not enough practice placements for handling the training in such concentrated amounts. He further updated that a likely solution will be to arrange entries twice a year in order to spread the training more throughout the year.

## **5. Items raised by the student board member**

### *a. Programme documentation*

The student Board member had asked for status on the case of programme documentation. In the autumn of last year students had raised awareness of missing programme documentation for the Faculty of Education. With further internal investigation it had turned out that programs in other faculties were also missing documentation. Since then efforts from the administration and the faculties have been made to get all required documentation in place. The Rector updated that four or so months ago only 9 out of 34 programs had all the necessary documentation in place whereas now 29 out of 38 programs have documentation in place, with the aim of having the process completed by the next Board meeting. The documentation has gone through approval of the study boards which the Rector was pleased to report are all functioning by now. The next step is to have everything to go through the Quality Unit, which is in start-up mode. Furthermore, the plan is to have revalidation of all programs every 4-5 year.

Members were positive about the progress made on the documentation and pointed out it being a step towards quality assurance.

The Rector expressed concern that the situation had been as it was in the autumn, and also about the fact the Board had been unaware of the situation – though it was understandable that they would have assumed that such basic governance had been in place.

### *b. Student support services*

The student Board member highlighted the lack of psychological counselling support for students. He stressed that if a student is in need for counselling, a private counsellor will charge around 1000 DKK per session making it difficult for students to afford it. He noted that Glasir is offering such a service to their students. Furthermore, he stated that it is important to offer some counselling services pointing out that if counselling on campus was offered it could decrease dropout rates.



The University Director noted that all costs on special needs currently go off the general grant to the university and we have to pay for it by law. For Glasir and the schools (fólkaskúlin) a separate grant is allocated for special needs. As part of the Executive Order he informed about proposed changes to have a separate grant like Glasir and the primary/secondary schools. The members asked when the new executive order will be in effect to which the University Director responded that we are awaiting ministry approval at the moment which could take some weeks.

*c. Erasmus participation*

The student member stressed the wish to be part of the EU Erasmus mobility programme in order to ensure equal opportunities compared to other European students. The Rector very much agreed and welcomed this and pointed out that the Erasmus option is not primarily dependent on the University's will, but also on whether the government is prepared to pay the fee. He understood that the last time the request was brought to the government it had been a choice between Horizon 2020 and Erasmus, and it was then decided to join Horizon 2020. The University is now looking into the requirements for joining and the Rector also encouraged the student representatives to push for it at the Ministry, noting that the wish coming from the students themselves may help to speed up the process at the Ministry. Board members from other universities stressed that it is important that the administration for Erasmus lies at the University and extra funding will be needed for that. Iceland's experience with Erasmus was discussed as an example.

## **Part 2**

### **6. University administration update – “strengthening the administration”: University Director**

The University Director updated on what functions have been arranged for the administration in order to strengthen the University administration and improve quality. A half time position in HR has been filled while the recruitment for another half time position in Student Services is in process. Próvbókin is now part of the Student Services, while previously being part of the central administration as a single function with one person in charge. The move to Student Services is to ensure it not being reliant on one single staff member. The two Pro Rector units will facilitate administration's cross-departmental efforts.

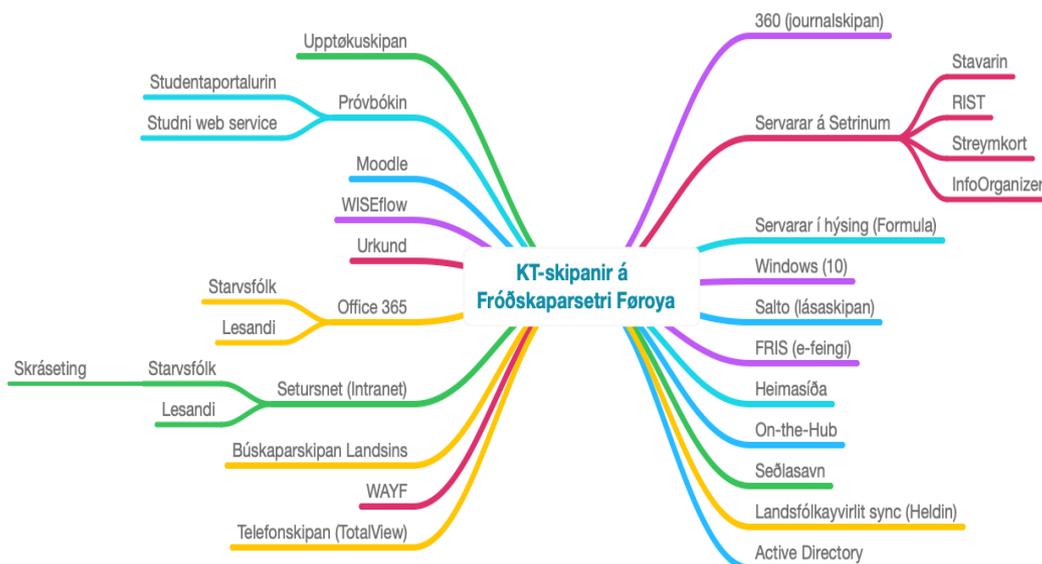
Additionally, time registration has been introduced for all administrative staff with a new intranet system. All staff are obliged to register sick days and vacation days.

The University has re-joined FRIS (consortium for scientific journals access) via the national library, making remote scientific access available for students again since January 1 this year.

The owner of Sjóvinnuhúsið has agreed to improve indoor climate conditions in the building by installing additional ventilation and air conditioning units at a cost of just under 1 million DKK. Finally, the University Director updated on a committee that he is part of working towards implementing a shared IT system for all of the educational



sector in the Faroe Islands. The University has several different systems for the moment, as indicated below.



The Director updated on the pros and cons being weighed with having an integrated system for the entire educational sector. See picture below.

**Cons**

- Less flexibility – ‘heavier’ solutions?
- Less autonomy
- Institutions too different for a shared solution?
- Potential disagreements about direction

**Pros**

- Economy of scale
- “From 1st Grade to Ph.D. (data flow / statistics)”
- Possibility to centralize expertise in different areas
- Better security / risk management
- More integration between systems at all levels
- Transparency
- Reduction of 1-person dependencies

Members discussed why it being necessary with a shared system for everything. One member noted that a similar attempt had been tried for eight Danish universities



and the challenges were on agreeing on systems and therefore advised not to create new systems but rather use existing systems which are working well.

The University Director highlighted the importance of finding solutions to the pervasive problem of having systems depending on one person only, which is the case of Próvbókin.

Overall, members were impressed by the work done for the last two months and highlighted the importance of working towards the next level.

#### *7. Finance: 2019, 2020 and planning for 2021*

The Rector talked briefly about the role of finance and efficiency, linked to the priorities in the draft strategic plan. In the past the Head of Finance had worked across a broad remit, extending beyond finance itself. However, with the ongoing strengthening of the administration, it would now be possible to re-focus the work of the Head of Finance more resolutely on finance and to look more closely at budgeting, efficiency, effectiveness and the alignment of finances with the strategic plan commitments and priorities. The Rector had been surprised to find that there was little real alignment between budgeting and strategic priorities previously, with budgets not being linked clearly to student recruitment and retention. He intended to begin to address that going forward. More generally, there was a critical role now for the Head of Finance in focusing on unnecessary expenditure and savings which would allow us to have resources to invest in more effective and productive ways.

#### *8. Focus on quality of education: Pro-Rector for Education Quality*

Bergur Djurhuus Hansen, the Pro Rector for Education Quality, presented the work so far in establishing the Quality Unit. He explained the first phase being going from minus to zero in order to set the base for going forward from zero and up.

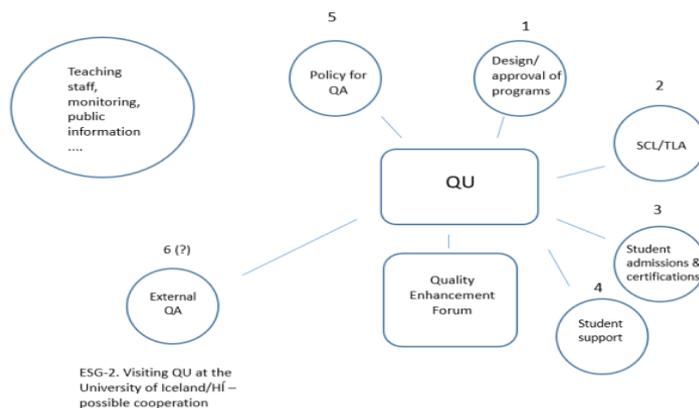
He reflected on a report from 2013 when the University had been assessed. The findings brought forward challenges on over-teaching, in both type of activity and amount of content, over-assessment, doubtful progression from level to level in assessments, a negative view of student capability and poor retention in subjects without a clear professional pathway into work. The Pro-Rector said that these challenges are still to some degree at least the same. The focus for now is getting people on board to work to address these challenges. The work is emerging on two levels:

- macro/formulas/guidelines
- and micro/hands-on/workshops

This is being done through grassroot leadership with - and supported by – formal authority.



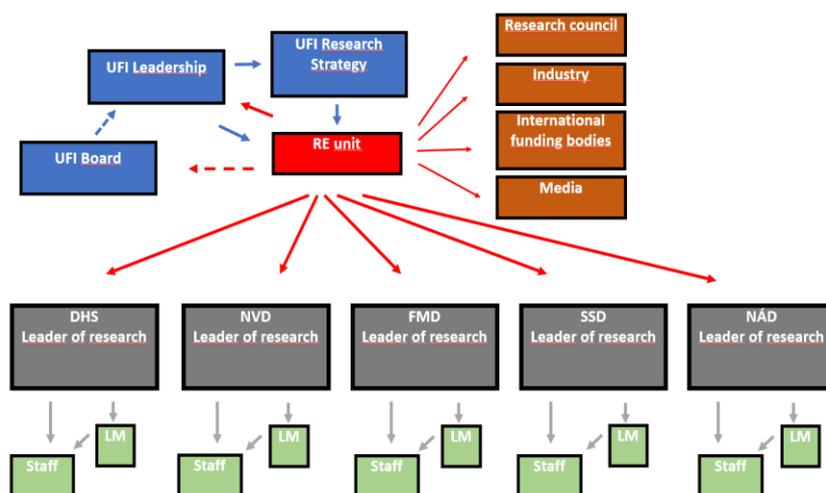
### Priorities



He then outlined the plan and timeframe for addressing the matter. Members were pleased with the plan.

### 9. Research and Enterprise/Innovation Office: Pro-Rector for Research and Enterprise/Innovation

Magni Mohr, the Pro Rector for Research and Enterprise/Innovation presented the work so far in establishing the Research and Enterprise/Innovation Office. He is gathering publications by University researchers in a database and will develop procedures for applications and publishing further from there. The purpose is to find a consensus for definitions of research and publishing. The overall focus in the first phase (March → July) is on developing guidelines for application, research and publishing. The second phase (August → December) is on implementing functions and systems across the university for research. The target is to have the Unit in full function in beginning of 2021 with the strategy integrated.



Members expressed it being an ambitious plan highlighting the importance for understanding that it will take time and to be aware that it may need to be adapted along the way. Challenges with evaluation systems and key performance indicators



were discussed. It was recommended to stick to simple solutions. Members asked how enterprise will be reached where a suggestion was to go out to visit the big companies and inviting them here but it being important not to do it too early. A strategic and financial plan is needed before applying from grants in order to ensure success. The members were impressed by the ambition and the work ongoing.

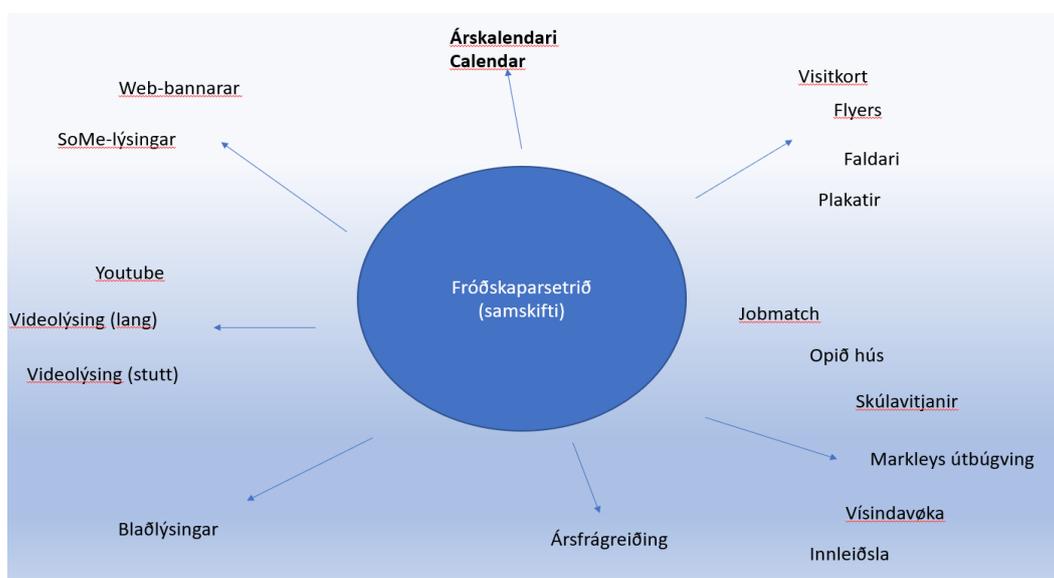
### 10. Human Resources: Designing and implementing a system of annual review for staff: HR Co-ordinator

The University Director presented the plan on implementing annual reviews on behalf of the HR Co-ordinator, who could not be present. Part of implementing annual reviews is re-structuring leadership at the University by having line managers. The line managers will do the annual reviews. All managers will be offered training for the task. The plan is to start off the reviews in April continuing to the summer with a follow up conversation in October. Then in December to evaluate the overall process. Board members from the University of Iceland and ITU shared how they do it in their universities for academic and non-academic staff.

### 11. Communication and marketing: University Director and Information Officer

Brynhild Thomsen, the Information Officer presented the campaign for student recruitment 2021. One of the fundamental tasks to evolve on is to realise our identity in the Faroese society. The purpose for this year's campaign is therefore not to spend large amounts on PR but to use our own current and past students as ambassadors. Unlike other universities a large number of our students are mature students and we need to get to 'know' our potential candidates before investing on branding.

Annual evaluations of our campaign should also become procedure. The Information Officer further elaborated on the idea of the university being the public voice in society and to put more focus on communicating our research to society. Members liked that. Finally, the film that is being launched on the social media was presented and members were pleased.





## **General Discussion**

After the presentations, members had a short overall discussion. Members were very positive about the strategy. One question was raised on the KPIs and the associated percentage targets. The Rector noted that the purpose is to create something to measure as we have little data for the moment. Members noted that it is important to realise the ambitions and to be ready to change the plans if we see needed. The focus however should be on high goals and progress towards them over time. The Chair of the Board and the Rector will finalise the strategy in the next two coming weeks and will then send it to the Board for approval.

The Chair of the Board and other members indicated that a lot had been achieved since September and there was clearly a new substance and energy to the work. The Rector stressed that this was down to the hard work of the colleagues who were supporting the new thinking and the new plans. Colleagues were working very hard in many cases to do a lot of things all at the same time. The Board members indicated that this was clear and was very well understood and appreciated. It would not be possible to do everything as fully and as well as one might hope for or aim for, but it was clearly necessary to proceed on several fronts simultaneously. Overall, there was a very positive feeling to the meeting and great appreciation from the Board for the hard work and ambition which was clearly in evidence.

The plan had previously been to review the regulations for the Board meetings today, but it will be postponed to the next meeting.

The next meeting will be on the 26<sup>th</sup> of May.

**Meeting finished at 17:00.**