



UNIVERSITY OF
THE FAROE ISLANDS

Strategic plan 2020–2024

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Latið okkum vaksa saman – Let’s grow together!

In 2014 the University of the Faroe Islands adopted its Strategic Plan 2014–2024. An aspect of the Plan was that it should be reviewed and updated during the 2019–2020 session, taking account of progress and achievements, and also new circumstances and challenges.

The resulting Strategic Plan 2020–2024, which we are very pleased now to present, provides a fresh statement of our mission, together with a vision of a well-integrated, modern, professional university, working in partnership and in collaboration, to serve the evolving needs of the Faroe Islands and our wider region.

The Plan sets out new and detailed commitments and priorities which will be monitored and reviewed as we grow together to achieve our common purpose. As we deliver on these commitments and priorities, we will be writing a new chapter in a proud history of growth and development at our still-young University, and providing a new basis for growth and development in the years to come.

Chik Collins and Ólavur Ellefsen

rector and chairman of the board

Strategic plan 2020–2024

Scope

This updated Strategic Plan¹ sets out the key priorities for the University of the Faroe Islands for the period 2020-2024. Staff and students, as well as wider stakeholders, have been extensively consulted in updating the plan and are instrumental in realizing its ambitions. The Plan will be operationalized through various implementation plans to be led by the Rector, overseen by the Board of Directors.

Vision

We will grow together as a single university, always focussed on our common purpose in being the University of (and for) the Faroe Islands. We will work in partnership – staff, students and with other stakeholders – to provide high quality and distinctive learning and teaching, underpinned by research of high international standing. Our work will have clear relevance to contemporary challenges on the local, national and international scales and will combine long-standing traditions of independent scholarship and academic freedom with a forward-looking culture of innovation and interdisciplinarity. The University will have a clear language policy supporting the usability and usage of the Faroese language. We will further strengthen our international collaborations and exchanges and will seek to increase mobility for our staff and students. Our staff will be supported in a culture which fosters growth, contribution and collaboration. We will regularly communicate our activities to all relevant stakeholders and will strengthen and extend our use of digital platforms to meet developing needs and opportunities. The University will work with partners to achieve the long-term redevelopment of our campus, and in the shorter term to achieve improvements to our accommodation and facilities. In all that we do, we will be committed to equality of opportunity, to inclusivity, and to supporting the well-being of our students and staff in an environment in which all can thrive and flourish.

¹ See “The University of the Faroe Islands – Goals and Strategy (2014-2024). In updating the plan, we acknowledge the inspiration taken from a selection of strategic plans from other universities internationally.



Mission

The University of the Faroe Islands, being the country's foremost knowledge centre, will:

Provide distinctive and high quality higher and continuing education to serve the evolving needs of the Faroe Islands.

Conduct high quality research, especially that relevant to the critical social, economic, cultural, legal and environmental needs of the Faroes, our wider region, and other countries and territories of similar size.

Perform a wider public service in response to the needs of the Faroe Islands, including continuously developing the Faroese language within academic teaching and research and in wider pursuit of sustainable economic, social and cultural development.

Education and Student Success

With a personal commitment to each of our students, we will provide a high-quality educational experience to equip them with the knowledge, skills and intellectual capacity to contribute positively and creatively to Faroese society and to the wider world.

Commitments

To provide consistently high level, academically challenging and quality-assured education for all our students, across an appropriate portfolio of programmes, and to ensure that we equip our graduates to develop successful careers.

We commit to review our portfolio of educational programmes to ensure that they reflect societal needs (including an appropriate balance of bachelors and masters programmes) and can be resourced to ensure a high-quality learning experience for our students. We will invest in a Quality Unit within the University administration, led by a Pro-Rector, which will develop, in dialogue and partnership with students, staff

and external stakeholders, clear policies and procedures for assuring and enhancing the quality of all our programmes – in accordance with the Bologna Process. These policies and procedures will be implemented fully and consistently, creating a transparent culture of continuous enhancement.

We will ensure access to training and development opportunities for our staff to ensure that they are well-equipped for contemporary and emerging approaches to learning, teaching and assessment, and particularly those most relevant to our context and needs. In all our educational programmes, we will maintain a focus on the knowledge and transferrable skills for graduate employment and postgraduate study, including research competences. We will always seek to involve relevant employers, across the public, voluntary and private sectors, in discussions regarding future needs.

To ensure that the delivery and development of the education provided by the University is guided by reliable and up-to-date information, including feedback from students, which is collected and used systematically and clearly to secure all-round enhancement.

We commit to ensuring the availability of accurate and up-to-date information on our students' academic progression and their experiences at the University, and we will use this information consistently to inform our continuous enhancement actions at every level. This data will inform the provision of appropriate support and guidance to students with a view to maximizing student retention, progression and satisfaction, consistent with appropriate academic attainment. We will be flexible in our approaches to teaching, learning and assessment, making creative use of our understanding of our context, needs and challenges to develop appropriately innovative visions and practices.

To seek to work in partnership with others to support and enhance the learning, living and social environment for students.

We commit to seek at all times to work closely with students and with both local and national government, and all other relevant agencies, to secure improvements. While there is a shared aspiration on the Faroe Islands for a comprehensive development of a new University Campus in the coming years, it is necessary to ensure that steps are taken meantime to secure enhancements, including greater provision of student accommodation, a strengthened focal point for student life, contemporary learning spaces and greater use of technology for learning appropriate to the context of the Faroe Islands.

Priorities

To invest in a Quality Unit within the University administration, led by a Pro-Rector.

To initiate a review of our portfolio of educational programmes by the end of 2020 and implement relevant changes thereafter.

To have at least two thirds of students on track to successfully complete their programme of study on schedule, 85% indicating satisfaction in a regular survey and 70% progressing into graduate destinations within 12 months of graduation.

To ensure we have appropriate information on our students, their progression and their destinations, and that we consistently secure and respond to student feedback.

To maintain a focused discussion with students, government, and other agencies, generating enhancements to the learning, living and social environment of student life.

Research and Enterprise

Research is the production of new knowledge effectively shared with all appropriate audiences. We are strongly committed to impactful, high quality research – to underpin learning and teaching, to address the critical social (including health and school education), economic, cultural and environmental needs of the Faroe Islands, our wider region, and other similar sized countries and territories, and to contribute to wider scientific progress.

Commitments

To promote and enable research of international quality across all our faculties and relevant to all our education programmes.

We have high ambition for research, and this is underpinned by the allocation of substantial research time for staff from the government funding we receive. This has seen our staff produce research of international quality, and indeed of international excellence. We will build on this to ensure an increasing production of high-quality research across and between our faculties, underpinning the delivery of learning and teaching and contributing relevant and impactful knowledge, both for the Faroe Islands and the wider world. Increasingly, we will apply for and secure external funding to support our research.

To support our people, and to make best use of our available resources to provide a conducive environment for them to build their profiles as international researchers.

We will invest in a Research and Enterprise Unit within the University administration, led by a Pro-Rector, to advise and support researchers in producing high quality external funding applications, which can in turn help to increase our research capacity. More generally, we will further enhance the environment for research and ensure our investment in research is reflected in the production and dissemination of appropriate research outputs. We will strengthen our capacity and mechanisms for leadership, support and mentoring for researchers, particularly earlier career researchers. All our researchers will feel encouraged to see themselves as active contributors to societal progress, both domestically and internationally. Consequently, the University of the Faroe Islands will become an even more attractive place for researchers to work and for external partners to collaborate with.

To produce impactful research, which contributes to the economic, social, cultural and environmental progress of the Faroe Islands and the wider world.

Research is fundamental to societal progress at all levels. The future depends on it. Universities have a duty to ensure research is rigorous, robust, effectively disseminated and accessible for non-academic audiences and the wider public and we will take this duty very seriously. Our research will be both relevant to and impactful upon key societal needs and challenges, both domestically and internationally, and particularly as encapsulated in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for 2030.



Priorities

To invest in a Research and Enterprise Unit, led by a Pro-Rector, with capacity to support high quality external funding applications which will cover the costs of research.

To have 60% of our academic staff named as authors on peer-reviewed research publications in any two-year period, and for all relevant staff to be on an appropriate research trajectory as evidenced by annual review discussions.

To have 60% of our academic staff named as applicants on high quality, external funding applications for research projects in any two-year period.

To encourage in particular research relevant to the social, economic, cultural and environmental needs of Faroese society, including as seen through the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for 2030.

People and Organizational Development

People are at the heart of everything that the University can achieve. To thrive, it is essential we attract, recruit and retain talented staff, and, by supporting growth and communicating well, foster motivation to contribute to the success of our commitments and priorities. This requires a diverse, inclusive, fair and open environment which is thoroughly professional and supports both positive relationships and growth. It also requires appropriate organizational structures and processes at both University and faculty levels, including a strengthened administration and modern and professional systems for work allocation, reporting and review.

As part of our organizational development, we will ensure that we communicate our mission and vision to all relevant stakeholders. To achieve this, we will make strategic use of appropriate platforms, regularly populated with accessible content.

Commitments

We will review the operational structures of the University at all levels, investing available resources strategically to secure and support progressive improvements.

As universities grow and develop, it is essential to review operational structures to ensure that they effectively serve commitments and priorities. Our University has grown significantly in recent years and it is important to look closely at the current fit and to address any gap that may exist, and which may be likely to grow. In doing this, we will be guided by the desire to ensure that we are a well modernized and professionalized University, with appropriate administrative and leadership capacity, always open to and learning from developments elsewhere.

To invest in our Human Resources capacity and in developing policies and processes to strengthen the framework to support our colleagues in making their contribution.

Modern, professional universities make critically important investments in Human Resources (or People) functions. This supports the development of policies and processes which ensure a positive working environment, with an open and inclusive culture that promotes equality of opportunity, values diversity and respects the rights and dignity of all. It also provides for policies and processes which strengthen the framework to support people – promoting good working relationships, opportunities for professional development, and contribution to the University's key commitments and priorities.



To consistently listen to, and communicate with, staff and to ensure that the University is seen as a great employer, where contribution is recognized and rewarded.

Commitment and trust in modern, professional organizations requires effective communication, and that communication must involve listening and responding to all relevant stakeholders, including our students and our staff. The University Leadership Team is committed to ensuring that there is consistent communication of this kind. We will take steps to amplify the voices of under-represented groups in leadership and decision-making and work to eliminate any barriers to their influence and success.

Priorities

To review and develop our organizational structures, modernizing and professionalizing in line with developments elsewhere, and investing available resources to achieve that.

To at least double our investment in our Human Resources office, which will develop and lead on the implementation of appropriate policies for the University, including those for workload allocation, annual review and positive working relationships.

To establish and maintain strong and consistent communication across the University, particularly between leaders and those they are responsible for leading, and with all other relevant stakeholders.

The Faroese Language

The University of the Faroe Islands, being the only Faroese University, has a special responsibility – exceeding that of most other universities in their own national contexts – in preserving and developing the Faroese language. This responsibility is of profound importance for the whole society, in terms of social inclusion, democracy and development, and it is one which the University will take very seriously at all times.

Commitments and priorities

To develop and implement a clear language policy and be a language role model amongst universities in similar sized countries and territories with their own languages.

To promote the use and development of Faroese academic language, including precise scientific terminology in all disciplines, and to support the publication of high quality academic work in Faroese.

To support the teaching of the Faroese language at all levels of education and its use and development in wider society, and to seek to do so also amongst Faroese people living abroad.

To support research in, and the teaching of, Faroese for non-native speakers, and particularly for those whose native language is other than Scandinavian.

and supported by both our Research and Enterprise Unit and the wider academic administration. A vital aspect of our external engagement will be with government and others in working to achieve a comprehensive campus development to bring the whole University together.

Commitments and priorities

To have a growing number of collaborations with partners on the Faroe Islands and internationally, providing innovative contributions impacting on societal needs.

To have 60% of our academic staff contributing to Faroese public debate, Faroese language publications for the wider public, or the preservation and development of the Faroese language.

To produce and disseminate, in Faroese and English, an annual review of research and enterprise activity, including dissemination activities, public engagement and collaboration with external partners, which documents outputs and impacts arising from the work we do and promotes continuing development of this work.

External Engagement and Partnership

We will work to strengthen the external engagement, knowledge exchange and innovation culture of the University. In doing so, we will aim to ensure that our education and research are of clear and increasing benefit to the wider public of the Faroe Islands, our wider region, and indeed the world. To achieve this, we will further our engagement with external organisations across the public and private sectors, as well as with civil society and our former students. This work will be prioritized at faculty level



Resources

The University of the Faroe Islands benefits from substantial funding from the Faroese taxpayer, and ensuring that the University remains both financially and environmentally sustainable is of critical importance. Enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of our operations, including through extending our use of digital platforms, and working together collaboratively will be key to delivering a sustainable basis for the ongoing development of our education and research.

Commitments and priorities

To review the effectiveness and efficiency of our main operations, and to ensure that we appropriately incentivize delivery against our key commitments and priorities.

To have year on year increases in resources received through external research applications and from enterprise activities and engagement with business and industry.

To strengthen our use of digital platforms, and work with external partners to develop new digital capacities, to support the existing and emerging needs of our University.





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