

Meeting of the UFI Board of Directors	
Date:	November 10 th 2023
Time:	3 hours (09:00 – 12:00)
Place:	Stova 73, Faculty of Education, Frælsið
Participants:	<p><i>Board members:</i> Ólavur Ellefsen (Chair) Marita Rasmussen (Deputy Chair) Elaine Munthe (External Member) Anders Bjarklev (External Member) Jónrit Halling (Staff Representative) Marin Strøm (Staff Representative) Anita Hansen (Student Representative)</p> <p><i>Deputy board members:</i> Heidi Poulsen (Deputy External Representative) Anna Sofía Lava (Deputy Staff Representative) Firouz Gāini (Deputy Staff Representative)</p> <p>University administration attendees: Martin T. Zachariassen (Rector) Johan Hansen (University Director) Louisa A. Fjallsbak (Executive Secretary) Odd A. Bjellvåg (Finance Manager) was present for item 3 on the agenda</p> <p><i>Could not attend:</i> Elena D’Amelio (Deputy External Representative) Anna Kirstín Sigurðardóttir (Deputy External Representative) Magnus Gaard (Deputy External Representative) Paul Kjartan Matras (Deputy Student Representative)</p>
Minutes by:	Louisa A. Fjallsbak



Agenda for Board Meeting: Friday 10th November 2023, 9:00-12:00

Venue: The meeting will be 'in person' at the Faculty of Education, Frælsið, Stova 73.

Main purpose of the meeting: For Board Members to receive the usual updates, and in particular a status on the work with the Strategic Plan 2030, in continuation of the strategic seminar August 31-September 1, 2023.

Proposed Agenda:

Coffee/breakfast from 8:30	
Part 1: 09:00-10:15	
Item	Recommendation to the Board
1. Chair's welcome and approval of Agenda (Paper 1)	To approve agenda subject to any amendments.
2. Approval of minutes from meeting of September 1, 2023 (Paper 2)	To approve subject to any additions/changes.
3. Finance Report, January-September 2023 (Paper 3)	To note, subject to discussion.
4. Report on consultations since last meeting (University Director)	To note, subject to discussion.
5. Rector's report on the period since last board meeting (Paper 5)	To note, subject to discussion.
10:15 – 10:45: <i>Comfort and Refreshment Break</i>	
Part 2: 10:45-12:00	
6. Status regarding Strategic Priorities for 2023-2024 (Paper 6b). The Faroese version Strategiskar raðfestingar fyri 2023 og 2024 - november 2023 (Paper 06a)	To note, subject to discussion
7. Status regarding work on Strategic Plan 2030; proposal for Foundations and Strategic Pillars (Paper 7a) and Time Plan for Developing Strategy (Paper 7b)	To note, subject to discussion
8. Proposed changes to "Regulations governing positions (posts and roles) at the University of the Faroe Islands" from November 2022 (Papers 8a and 8b)	To approve, subject to discussion.
9. Plan for Board Meetings in 2024 (Paper 9)	To approve, subject to discussion.
12:00 Lunch in Canteen at Frælsið	

1. Chair's welcome and approval of Agenda (Paper 1)

The Chair of the Board Ólavur Ellefsen (ÓE) opened the meeting and welcomed the board members.

Apologies for absence were received from Elena D'Amelio, Anna Kirstín Sigurðardóttir, Magnus Gaard and Paul Kjartan Matras.



There were no comments to the agenda for the meeting and it was then approved.

2. Approval of minutes from meeting of February 2023 (Paper 2)

The minutes from the last board meeting were reviewed. This was a brief meeting following the strategy seminar in Gjógv.

Highlighted points were read out. There were no further comments, and the minutes were approved.

3. Finance Report 2023 (Paper 3)

Odd A. Bjellvåg (OB) presented the financial accounts for the period of January to September 2023. He reviewed the notes to the report and clarified some items:

It is proving challenging to recruit and fill out all vacant positions. As a result, the wages account is in surplus.

The total expenditures up until September 2023 are kr. 101 million. The total projected expenditures for the year 2023 are kr. 147 million.

Adjustments of kr. 1,5 million will be made to the research budgets. The Bakkafrost project is by far the largest project in the financial records, with an expected total expenditure of kr. 18 million over the next few years.

The special accounts 71, 72, 76 and 77 were clarified. OB explained that these are clearing accounts associated with the public treasury. The university is an entity of the public treasury. These accounts do, however, not specify the nature of the expense. An example is the licence for PURE, which the university holds on behalf of all national research institutions and the library that in return repay their share of the cost through the treasury. The expense of janitor services is another example. This system is transparent, and authorities have access. Anders Bjarklev (AB) and Elaine Munthe (EM) recognise similar systems in Denmark and Norway.

Martin Zachariasen (MZ) added to the discussion of transparency, that the university is cooperating with Ministry of Finance on a PhD project on fraud detection.

The expected budget for 2024 is not yet known since the government's budget proposal has not yet been approved by parliament. The percentage growth in wages is still to be negotiated. Nurses are currently striking for the 6th week in a row.

The increased cost of living in general was discussed. The increased cost in e.g., Norway is around 5-6% this year. OB mentioned that the expected increased cost of living for 2023-24 is 4%.

There were no comments to the presented financial report. Odd A. Bjellvåg left the meeting.

4. Report on consultations since last meeting (University Director) (Paper 4)



There have been two consultations since the last meeting:

- Consultation on proposed Kervi+ law.
The response focused on the requirement of adhering to the data processing agreement in EU legislation (GDPR and exchange of information). See response in paper 4a.
- Consultation on proposed law for a language school (Faroese as an additional language).
The response emphasized the need for research into Faroese as additional language and the importance of a more holistic approach. See response in paper 4b.

5. Rector's report on the period since last board meeting (Paper 5)

MZ presented the status on the focus areas for November 2023, see also paper 5.

Education: Full participation in Bologna/EHEA. Quality assurance and enhancement. Flexible learning paths. Competence development.

- Quality Assurance and Enhancement actions.
 - Event organised this afternoon in Kongshøll with presentations from the Ministry. Laws and regulations with implementing actions are anticipated in spring 2024 after being delayed through 2023.
- Revised regulations.
 - Required attendance was discussed. The University is not going to require attendance as a general rule for the first semester. A possible solution is to register attendance and require inactive student to attend conversation sessions with student counsellors. Attending classes and participating in discussions is very important in forming the student. Simultaneously, it is necessary to develop flexible learning paths to meet the students needs. Classes held after work hours is not appealing for students with families. ÓE clarified, that the board should choose strategies, that create the best result. MZ added, that course descriptions should clearly explain the expected amount of time allocated to studying, on exams, on group work etc.
 - The first full year monitoring of the educational programme is planned for the spring term 2024.

Research: Increase capacity, external research funding and research collaboration. Competence development.

- Enterprise and collaboration.
 - Municipalities Association: Memorandum of Understanding to go into research collaboration.
 - “Barnaverkætlanin is a large scale and significant project at the Ministry inspired by similar work in Iceland. The university investigates the establishment of a centre for children and young ones.
 - Connection to the House of Industry is going well.
 - UNICAST /European Universities application. The Faroe Islands are not a member of Erasmus+ and therefore the University cannot receive any funds. However, participating is beneficial and provides excellent opportunities for networking and collaboration.



- A Management Forum for research institutions on the Faroe Islands is established on November 1st, 2023.
- Meeting held with the private foundation Betri Stuðul on potential funding. Betri Stuðul awards kr. 30 million a year to projects and competence building.

Management and Administration: Develop Strategy 2025-2028. Strengthen administration, New IT Systems, Competence development.

- Development Strategic plan 2030 will be discussed later under point 7.
- Centralisation of the student administration: Initial move planned for 1st November 2023 is postponed until the end of November 2023. Information meetings are held for all employees. All students will have one entry point to the student administration which is located in Wing 1 on Frælsið.
- New IT Systems
 - Kervi+ initially runs parallel with the old system Próvbókin. The new system provides much better security.
 - The infrastructure of Skúlanet is still being discussed with Gjaldsstovan.
 - Moxis will host and provide services to the system Moodle.

University campus: New main campus building. Renovation of old school building at Frælsið

- New main campus building:
 - Partial funding of kr. 6 million for project planning has been allocated in the proposal for Finance Act 2024. Parliament Acts (in preparation) will provide additional funds.
- Renovation Frælsið:
 - Renovation of Wing 5 is ongoing in agreement with the Ministry but has been delayed. The agreement with Tórshavn Municipality is to vacate one floor in Sjóvinnuhúsið by 2024. An adjusted timeline needs to be agreed with the municipality, now it is known, that renovation is not complete by summer 2024. Election at Tórshavn Municipality is planned for late 2024.
 - At the last meeting with Tórshavn Municipality the timing of the move was discussed but the specific timeline needs to be confirmed.
 - The temporary parking lot will be completed within weeks. It is necessary to solve the challenge of parking at Frælsið, while building a underground parking cellar. ÓE suggested, that we investigate the possibility of parking tunnels. These are less expensive.

Other activities and updates:

- AI and education
 - An open event was held with participation from Jeppe Bundsgaard, an expert from Denmark. The event was very well attended and received. MZ suggested that the university looks at the Russel group principles regarding AI.
- Student counselling
 - Psychological counselling will be added the services of the student counsellors. This will be organised as Ph.D. research position. The university will fund the initial year, while the project finds additional funding beyond this.
- Finance Act 2024
 - New strategic initiatives were presented to the Ministry, but none have been added to the proposed Finance Act2024. Politically, there are no intentions to increase budgets.



- New Library
 - In effect from 1st January 2024 the institution Landsbókasavnið will become a university library. The library management meets with faculties to assess requirements in preparation for the new task.

6. Status regarding Strategic Priorities for 2023-2024 (Paper 6b). The faroese version “Strategiskar raðfestingar fyri 2023 og 2024 - november 2023” (Paper 06a)

MZ presented the status of the updated document strategic priorities 2023-2024.

MZ clarified, that the university is considering attending the event Job Match again but has this year focused on the event aimed at future university students (“Markleys Útbúgving”). The Job Match event is attended by employers and is an excellent networking event. It was suggested that the university is present at these events. The task could possibly be outsourced to e.g., Hugskotið. JH explained that a new concept has been tried for the “Markleys Útbúgving” event. Instead of multiple courses being presented, the focus was on having one main presentation aiming to sell the university, student life, the city of Tórshavn etc. This was a success well aided by a competition to win a new iPhone in return for email addresses. This enables the university to contact potential students when the recruiting campaign begins.

EM agreed that the strategic priorities is a good concept of presenting this work. She was confused by the colour code, and why unfinished projects can be green. MZ clarified, that the colour green defines projects that are either going according to plan or finished according to plan.

ÓE initiated the discussion on how often a two-year strategic priority document should be presented to the board. **It was agreed that this document should be presented to the board every six months. The current document will be replaced by the document strategic priorities for 2024-25.**

7. Status regarding work on Strategic Plan 2030; proposal for Foundations and Strategic Pillars (Paper 7a) and Time Plan for Developing Strategy (Paper 7b)

The Rector presented an update on the paper to the board for discussion. The document includes input from the strategy seminar.

Strategic Plan 2030 document is built up by foundations and strategic pillars.

ÓE asked the board if the foundations are sufficient or if anything is missing. It was discussed to what extent research and a sustainable approach should be included. In addition Nordic and arctic issues should be considered.

It is important, to have a wider discussion on how the university best can serve the Faroese society.

There may be a contradiction between the task of safeguarding the Faroese language and culture and to aspire to be an international university. The language is a barrier. It is necessary to have courses in English to be international. Additionally, course descriptions and other material would need to be in English. The Faculty of Science and Technology (NVD) is currently conducting staff meetings in English.

MZ proceeded and explained the three strategic pillars.



Strategic pillar I: Build research and high-level educational capacity relevant for major sectors on the Faroe Islands.

- *Food and biotechnology:* Over 90 % of export is food. It is a good rationale to focus on this area.
- *Green energy and transport.* Supports a sustainable approach and is very relevant.
- *Civil engineering.* Climate change could add on the importance of research into engineering for harsher climate.
- *Sustainable business tourism.* The Faroese Tourist Board has just presented an ambitious strategy for the coming years. Tourism is successful and growing and the university should provide education and competences for this industry.
- *Medicine and public health.* A university hospital is currently being considered. In collaboration with other institutions and universities, the university could establish a knowledge base for research and educational programmes.

There is a need to build research capacity in these areas. JH clarified that all educational programmes must be approved by the Minister's office. It is therefore crucial, to have political support for the new strategy.

Strategic pillar II: Broaden the target groups for education offerings and strengthen the international dimension.

- Offer relevant study programmes and an attractive study environment to new target groups.
- Strengthen the international dimension of the university.

Strategic pillar III: Develop new educational types and modes of delivery.

- Increased flexibility to those who really need it.
- More life- long learning / FLP education offers and new modes of delivery.

MZ explained the planned process for finalising the strategy 2030. JH and MZ will first tour the faculties with this presentation. The intention is then to hold a staff event in January to discuss strategy 2030. The result from the staff strategy event will form the basis for the first strategy draft. The aim is to have a hearing of the strategy in March-May 2024 and subsequent approval by the board in summer 2024.

8. *Proposed changes to "Regulations governing positions (posts and roles) at the University of the Faroe Islands" from November 2022 (Papers 8a and 8b)*

MZ presented a proposed change in Article 5 in Regulation governing positions. A new Ph.D. position is introduced, and a more detailed description of the postdoctoral position is given. Both positions are fixed term academic positions. The new Ph.D. position is a career position and extends the Ph.D. period to 4 years, allowing one extra year of teaching compared to the traditional Ph.D. position which is 3 years.

The board concluded that the terms Ph.D. student and Ph.D. scholarship are confusing. The term scholarship should be changed. It was also suggested to soften the wording in Section 5.2 on Associate Professorship Assessment (lektarameting).

MZ summarised that the board will receive an updated proposal by email for final approval/comments.



9. Plan for Board Meetings in 2024 (Paper 9)

The calendar for the boards meeting in 2024 was presented for approval, see paper 9. It was clarified that overseas members of the board that are not able to attend in person may participate via Zoom.

The calendar plan for 2024 was approved.

10. Chair's summation and concluding remarks.

The chair of the board thanked members for attending the meeting and concluded, that the meeting has completed the items on the agenda.

Anita Hansen is ending her term since she completed her studies. In her place Erika Høgnadóttir Andersen has been appointed as student representative and Paul Kjartan Matras has been chosen deputy Student Representative of the board.

Thank you for this year.

The meeting ended at 12:00.