

Meeting of the UFI Board of Directors	
Date:	June 9, 2023
Time:	3 hours (09:00 – 12:00)
Place:	NÁD, Faculty of Education, Frælsið, Room 73
Participants:	<p><i>Board members:</i> Ólavur Ellefsen (Chair) Marita Rasmussen (Deputy Chair) – attended from 10:00 Anders Bjarklev (External Member) – attended online Elaine Munthe (External Member) – attended online Marin Strøm (Staff Representative) Jónrit Halling (Staff Representative) Magnus Gaard, (Deputy External Representative)</p> <p><i>Deputy board members:</i> Firouz Gaïni (Deputy Staff Representative) Páll Magnus Dam í Baianstovu (Student Deputy)</p> <p><i>University administration attendees:</i> Martin T. Zachariasen (Rector) Johan Hansen (University Director) Odd Bjellvåg (Finance Manager) – attended from start of meeting until completion of item 3.</p> <p><i>Could not attend:</i> Anita Hansen (Student Representative) Anna Kirstin Sigurðardóttir (Deputy External Representative) Heidi Poulsen (Deputy External Representative) Anna Sofía Lava (Deputy Staff Representative) – on maternity leave.</p>
Minutes by:	Louisa A. Fjallsbak

**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 February 6 2023 (Paper 2)	To approve subject to any additions/changes.
3. Finance Report, January-May 2022 (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. Final Letter of Response from Ministry and University to the International Review Team (Paper 6)	To note, subject to discussion.
7. Status regarding Strategic Plan 2020-2024 and Strategic Priorities for 2023-2024 (Paper 7a and Paper 7b)	To note, subject to discussion.
8. Mandate regarding Ph.D. School regulations (Paper 8a and Paper 8b)	To approve.
12:00 Lunch in Canteen at Frælsið	

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

The Chair of the Board, Ólavur Ellefsen, attended online 09:00-10:00 due to logistical difficulties and after that in person.

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. There were no further comments, and the minutes were approved.

3. Finance Report 2023 (Paper 3)

Odd Bjellvåg, Head of Finance, presented the annual accounts for 2022. There was a slight surplus of DKK 17.000 compared to the budget. The assessment is that this is a good result for the year.

The UFI leadership proposed to list the administration costs separately from the shared expenditure in the accounts overview. Hitherto they have been listed together but since most of the shared expenses aren't directly incurred by the administration (e.g., cost of access to scientific journals, royalty payments, IT, electricity, oil, rent, cleaning, etc. which all primarily are incurred by the



faculties), it makes more sense to list them separately since otherwise it presents a misleadingly high cost of administration.

Board member Elaine Munthe commented that this split makes good sense. Ólavur Ellefsen asked if it is difficult to split these expenses. Odd Bjellvåg replied that this is not difficult and would not change historical records in any way. Ólavur Ellefsen concluded that as long as the split is clearly defined, then it is fine.

Setur In total 2023		Monthly account, confirm				Monthly budget								Projection	Budget	Budget surplus		
St.konta	Heiti	jan.23	feb.23	mar.23	apr.23	mai.23	jun.23	jul.23	aug.23	sep.23	okt.23	nov.23	des.23	13.16	Framrokn	Báskett	Avlop	Avlop%
11	Lønir v.m.	8.155	8.555	10.296	10.335	9.804	10.308	10.458	10.608	10.608	10.808	10.808	10.831	0	121.572	121.903	330	0%
14	Keyp av vörum og tænastum	1.059	1.378	1.726	1.403	1.533	1.533	1.533	1.533	1.603	1.849	1.909	1.856	0	18.913	19.340	427	2%
15	Keyp av útbúnaði, netto	77	55	85	61	249	249	249	249	249	249	249	249	0	2.267	2.984	717	24%
16	Leiga, viðlíkahald og skattur	594	594	591	599	950	586	586	586	706	706	706	786	0	7.988	7.953	-36	0%
21	Søla av vörum og tænastum	-39	-7	-50	-19	-15	-15	-15	-15	-15	-15	-15	-15	0	-235	-182	53	29%
52	Tískot til einstaklingar	3	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	0	-25	0%
65	Flytingarintøkur úr útlöndum	0	-35	0	-24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-59	0	59	0%
72	Flytingar frá landi til kommunur (land)	13	8	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	27	0	-27	0%
76	Innanh. flyt. millum almennar stovn. (innt)	0	-3	0	-5	-195	-1.145	-526	-526	-526	-526	-526	-658	0	-4.634	-5.406	-773	-14%
	Tíðsams	9.861	10.568	12.648	12.356	12.325	11.515	12.284	12.434	12.624	13.071	13.131	13.048	0	145.865	146.591	726	0%
	Avlop í mun til ætlan	515	308	-51	-45									0			Surplus	

This projected result for January to April 2023 is DKK 726k, which includes an expected rise in salaries of 4%. This is within the budget frame for the year 2023. Adjustments will be made in August 2023, when we have a better knowledge of the yearly activities.

Finally, the expected expenses for external projects were presented.

University Director Johan Hansen explained that the public finance system, BSL, is great in terms of transparency.

Reports need to be translated into English for future board meetings.

There were no further questions from the board.

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

There has been no hearing since the last board meeting.

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

Rector Martin T. Zachariassen presented the status on ongoing activities with a focus on activities since the last board meeting (paper 5). He highlighted on-going work on quality assurance and enhancement, the student satisfaction survey 2023, the increase in external research applications, the reorganisation of the administration, new it-systems, and the new governance model and status for the campus development project.

The board discussed the report and expressed satisfaction with the progress on these important matters. Also, the board asked for an executive summary of the main results from the student satisfaction survey 2023, which will be sent in writing to the board.

6. Final Letter of Response from Ministry and University to the International Review Team (Paper 6)

Rector went through the final document sent to the International Review Team. He pointed out the few additions that the Ministry made to the version drafted by the university, and which was presented at the last board meeting.



The board had no further comments.

7. Status regarding Strategic Plan 2020-2024 and Strategic Priorities for 2023-2024 (Paper 7a and Paper 7b)

Rector presented the status of the current strategy plan (paper 7a) and introduced the document describing the strategic priorities for 2023-2024 (paper 7b). The latter document is organised around four main areas:

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

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

Management and Administration: Develop strategy 2025-2028. Strengthen administration. New IT systems. Competence development.

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

The document lists numbered initiatives, a timeline, and responsible unit(s).

Education:

Rector explained that the first five initiatives have the Quality Enhancement Forum for Education as responsible. The three top items heavily involve the Ministry; therefore, they are mentioned as being (co)responsible. Comments to the initiatives are listed below.

Initiative 1.4: Ólavur Ellefsen asked when the yearly monitoring of programmes would start. Martin T. Zachariassen explained that a pilot involving five educational programmes is currently running, and all educational programmes will participate in yearly monitoring from spring 2024 and onwards.

Initiative 1.5: Elaine Munthe asked how the external reviews are prepared, and if questions will be the same or would be relevant for each program. She has experience of evaluation of programmes in Norway and in Denmark and suggested that the university could have central questions. Martin T. Zachariassen explained that this is still in the planning phase, but the intention is to define a number of common themes that all evaluations will refer to. The plan will look in particular at the Icelandic process, since it outlines a broad, holistic view that fits well to the university. Elaine Munthe will share her experiences with Martin T. Zachariassen and the Quality Unit.

Research:

Initiative 2.1: Marin Strøm pointed out that the researchers mentioned in the initiative are also teaching. Staff is, at times, spread very thin. She cautioned, that the ambitions are high, and should consider the available resources.

Management and administration:

Initiative 3.2: The board discussed issues related to the mental health of students.

The university student councillors should have access to councillors/qualified psychologists for supervision to strengthen their ability to cope in their role.



The university student councillors arrange two annual events that focus on exams and anxiety.

Marin Strøm added that there are more and more reports from the counsellors of students with mental health issues.

It was mentioned that the high school Glasir has qualified personnel in place to counsel students on site paid for by the Ministry. Magnus Gaard added that high schools also see a rise in mental health issues. The program with an on-site psychologist available to students has been positive and helpful. It is evident that access to a professional to talk to is helpful in early development and can ease the problems the student faces. Consultation is free of charge, and it is possible to book a time and to drop by.

Conclusions:

Ólavur Ellefsen asked the board for any comments and added that this is a good way to present strategic initiatives. He asked the board if an updated version is needed. Rector Martin T. Zachariassen suggested that the board receives a revised version of the document twice a year.

Board member Marita Rasmussen emphasised that we need to know where we are to know where to go. The board needs updates to be able to send the university in the right direction. It would be beneficial to discuss the highlights regarding the current strategy plan for the strategy seminar on August 31 - September 1, 2023.

There were discussions on having a long-term strategy for the university, such as 8 – 10 years. This would be appreciated by the board. Such a strategy document should be reassessed regularly.

Board member Anders Bjarklev added that in his experience it is normal to set out long-term directions. He would appreciate a longer time span, e.g., a 10-year plan.

Ólavur Ellefsen agreed that it is beneficial to have the two-year rolling strategic priorities, like we do now, and to have the long-term directions e.g., Strategy for 2033. Martin T. Zachariassen agreed that the document describing the strategic priorities for 2023-2024 is more like a project portfolio plan where a two-year time span is suitable. The next strategic plan could be up to 10 years.

It was discussed whether the board should be involved in developing the portfolio or should concentrate on making the framework for the university leadership. Fundamentally, the university leadership produces the portfolio for the university and the engagement for implementation. It is also crucial to understand, that the university cannot work alone, and should engage with the community and other institutions. The university should clearly signal, an intent to invite “all to work with us”. The core message should be, that the role of the university is not only to educate, but to increase the knowledge base working together with other institutions. It was suggested that the university sets up a list of focus areas for knowledge building.

There is a political pressure on education and courses, that the university should provide. The board should evaluate if it should have an opinion, and how this opinion should be articulated. There should be a market for providing education. This is a large and relevant good discussion, which is very important to have. Firouz Gaini reminded that the Faroes is a diverse society, which makes it difficult regarding the perspective on skill and accomplishments across fields. There should be room for unpredictability.

Martin T. Zachariassen noted that education needs have been the core strategic driver for the university in the past. We also need to make research needs a driver in the future.



The board agreed to decide on the requirement of the next strategy at the strategy seminar in August/September. Ólavur Ellefsen clarified that the seminar will *in person* and *offsite*.

8. Mandate regarding Ph.D. School regulations (Paper 8a and Paper 8b)

The board is requested to give a mandate to the Rector/University Leadership to stipulate the details pertaining to how PhD defences are conducted, see documents 8a.

Work is well underway to set up a PhD school at the university. The executive order regarding the PhD education at the university is currently in effect and fit for purpose. The document "Procedure for conducting PhD defence" (in Faroese "Mannagongd í samband við framløgu av Ph.D. ritgerð") is from 2002 and needs revision, since it refers to structures that are no longer in place. This document was approved by Setursráðið, the governing body prior to the introduction of the Board of Directors.

It is evident that the current policies and procedures need to be updated and adjusted.

Elaine Munthe clarified that the mandate would be given to changes within the national guidelines. Anders Bjarklev agreed and explained that in Denmark and surely elsewhere, the Ministry provides national guidelines on PhD education. He gave an example from his own university, where the responsibility is shared between the university PhD council and rector.

The board approved the proposal to give rector the mandate to approve changes regarding PhD school regulations.

9. Chair's summation and concluding remarks

The chair of the board thanked members for attending the meeting. Details on the strategy seminar August 31 - September 1, 2023, will be provided by email and he hopes to see everyone by the end of August.

The meeting ended at 12:00.