



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

QUALITY SYSTEM FOR EDUCATION

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UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

Table of Contents

Quality System for Education.....	1
Activity 1: Student Surveys	6
Activity 2: Student Union Report.....	9
Activity 3: Course Evaluations	11
Activity 4: Programme Evaluations	13
Activity 5: Achieving of National Qualitative Targets.....	15
Activity 6: Annual Reports and Operational Plans for Degree Programmes and Third-Cycle Subject Areas	17
Activity 7: Educational Evaluations through External Peer Reviews.....	19
Activity 8: Faculty Audits	21
Activity 9: Follow-Up and Evaluation of the Quality System	23
Appendix 1	25
Appendix 2	28
Appendix 3	31



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

Summary

Umeå University has a coherent quality system for education that is integrated into the University's operating cycle. The quality system is based on nine activities that support, develop and highlight our systematic quality work. These activities together encompass all of the University's organisational levels and are implemented in different time cycles. This document describes these activities and how they contribute to both quality development and quality assurance.

Introduction

Umeå University is committed to maintaining a strong national and international position. This necessitates the highest possible quality in our courses and programmes and well-developed interaction between research, education and external collaboration (third-stream activities). In order for Umeå University to achieve its ambitions, strategic and systematic quality work is required.

Umeå University's quality system for education covers all levels; first, second and third-cycle education. The quality system is intended to be used, as a whole and in its parts, as a tool for constant development of the quality of the University's courses and programmes, and as a means to achieve a consensus on what distinguishes high quality in education and what requirements must be met. The quality work thus involves development as well as follow-up and review.

Umeå University's operating cycle ensures that the planning, management and follow-up of the University's development are consistent with the University's vision and strategies. Integrating the operating cycle and the quality system with one another, creates prerequisites for strategic management of the University while also contributing to a strengthened quality culture.

The quality system activities

The quality system for courses and programmes is based on nine activities that support, develop and highlight the systematic quality work. The activities are largely based on long-established processes at the University and include elements of both collegial culture and external scrutiny. Each activity is designed to help identify strengths and development areas, and to address any shortcomings. In order to ensure continuity and a systematic approach to the quality work, all activities are carried out at regular intervals. Moreover, employees and students¹ at all organisational levels of the University are involved in the activities, which promotes participation, engagement and responsibility.

The key quality development activities are carried out at the course level (Activity 3) and the programme/third-cycle subject area level (Activity 6). Activities 1-5 streamline the collection of information and data that form the basis for Activity 6, the programmes' annual reports and operational plans, in which the results of the activities are followed up and analysed and any remedial measures described. Activities 7-9 contain elements of external review, while Activities 8-9 contribute specifically to the renewal of the quality system (see Figure 1). The quality work and the quality system, both as a whole and in their parts, are therefore regularly evaluated and revised as needed within the framework of the system. Some activities are common to courses and programmes at all levels, while others differ depending on whether they pertain to first and second-cycle, or to third-cycle, courses and programmes.

Each activity corresponds to a number of European standards and quality assurance guidelines within the European Higher Education Area (ESG) developed by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, ENQA. These standards and guidelines form the basis of the Swedish Higher Education Authority's evaluations of higher education in Sweden. For a more detailed description of the various standards and how Umeå University's quality system relates to these, see page 23. Where relevant, reference is made to governing documents at Umeå University.

¹ Throughout this document, the term student also includes doctoral students.

UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

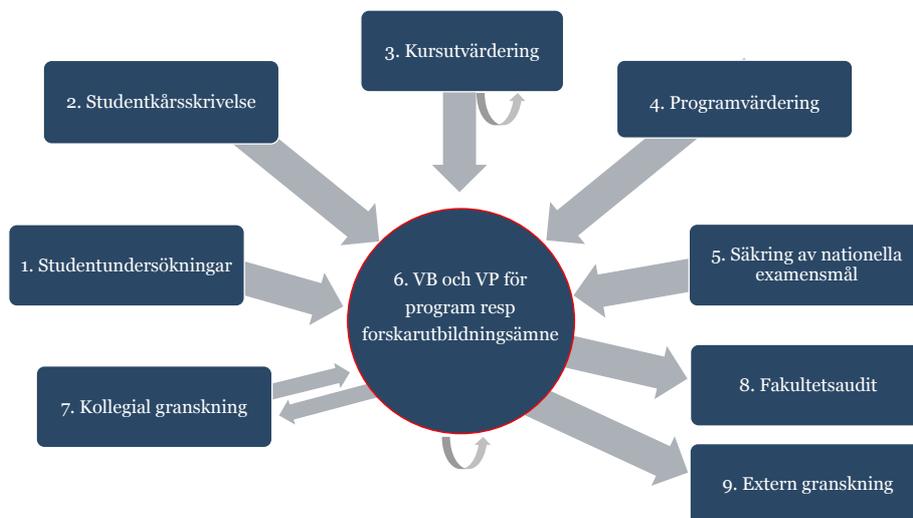


Figure 1: The nine activities of the quality system. Activity 6 has a particularly prominent position in the system as it is the activity where information and data from other activities are compiled and analysed. Activity 6 also forms the basis for operational dialogues.

Permeating perspectives

The quality system includes a number of perspectives that should be integrated into courses and degree programmes. These perspectives are²:

- Research links
- Internationalisation
- Equality
- External collaboration (third-stream activities) and links to working life
- Sustainable development
- Student influence and student-centred learning

By giving these perspectives a prominent place in the quality system's activities, Umeå University ensures that a course or programme as a whole provides the conditions the students need to acquire adequate knowledge and skills within each of the above perspectives. However, this does not mean that every single course must cover every perspective.

Competence provision and continuing professional development

One of the most important strategic tools for Umeå University to achieve its goals and develop its quality in the long term is the University's ability to recruit, retain and develop qualified teachers and researchers. Procedures and governing documents included in Umeå University's quality system contain a number of processes aimed at quality development and quality assurance, as well as continuing professional development and provision of skilled teaching staff.

Umeå University's recruitment process guarantees transparency and legal security in the hiring of teaching and research staff.³ Teachers who are recruited have high scientific and pedagogical competence within their respective fields and in relevant cases, professional competence.⁴ Teachers at Umeå University are allocated time for research or artistic development work, for following developments within their subject areas, or for other

² See appendix 2.

³ Recruitment process when hiring teachers.

⁴ Appointments Procedure for Teachers at Umeå University.



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

kinds of competence development. This part of the teachers' annual working hours amounts to at least 20 per cent for a senior lecturer and at least 10 per cent for a lecturer over a three-year period.⁵ Umeå University's models for the acquisition of pedagogical and academic qualifications are aimed at stimulating, rewarding and highlighting the teachers' competence.^{6,7} Teachers' pedagogical development is supported by the Centre for Educational Development.

A competence development plan is drawn up for each employee, which is followed up in conjunction with annual competence development dialogues. Competence provision plans enabling long-term and strategic work with the provision of teaching staff are found at different levels in the organisation and include plans for teachers' pedagogical and subject-specific competence development. The work with continuing professional development is followed up in annual reports and in operational dialogues.

Division of responsibilities

There is a clear division of responsibilities in the quality work at Umeå University. The University Board and the Vice-Chancellor have overall responsibility for adapting the University's activities so that high quality is achieved in both education and research. It is also the responsibility of the University Management to ensure that the quality work is appropriate and in accordance with the University's quality system.

The Strategic Council for Education (USR) is responsible for initiating, developing and coordinating matters within the field of education, including external collaboration and internationalisation. USR has specific responsibility for driving the development, implementation and monitoring of the University's quality system for first and second-cycle courses and programs.

The Strategic Council for Research and Doctoral Education (FOSTRA) is responsible for initiating, developing and coordinating matters within the field of research and third-cycle education, including external collaboration and internationalisation. FOSTRA has specific responsibility for driving the development, implementation and monitoring of the University's quality system for third-cycle level programmes.

Beyond this, the responsibility for quality development and quality assurance at Umeå University also follows the University's regular line structure. This means that each faculty board is responsible for quality development and quality assurance of research and education within the faculty's area. The division of responsibilities and work is outlined in each faculty's Delegation Procedure and Rules of Procedure. Teachers and researchers have a particular responsibility to contribute to high quality education and research in their respective subject areas. For each activity in the quality system, there is a specified function which is responsible for the activity in question.

Umeå University strives to ensure that students participate actively in the quality work, for example by being represented on boards and committees at all levels. By providing financial compensation to the Student Unions, Umeå University aims to facilitate the students' participation in the quality development and quality assurance of their courses and programmes. Corresponding financial compensation is provided by the faculties and the Umeå School of Education. The Student Unions have an independent responsibility for Activity 2 of the quality system, the Student Union Report.

⁵ Working Hours Agreement for Teachers.

⁶ Administrative Procedures for Pedagogical Qualification at Umeå University.

⁷ Appointments Procedure for Teachers at Umeå University.



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

Activity 1: Student Surveys

Background and purpose

Umeå University has four centrally initiated surveys aimed at students and doctoral students: The New Student Survey and the Student Barometer for students at the first-cycle level, and the Employee Survey and the Postgraduate Exit Survey for doctoral students. These surveys are aimed at gathering information on students' views, assessments and experiences of both courses and programmes and the learning and research environment. The surveys are a way of working to ensure that the students take an active part in the work of further developing our courses and programmes.

A. Surveys for first and second-cycle education

Responsible function/s	USR
Implementation	<p>A working group with representatives from the faculties⁸, Student Services, the Planning Office and the students handles the planning of the New Student Survey, the Student Barometer and the Postgraduate Exit Survey (see Surveys for third-cycle education). The surveys are designed so as to provide a basis for monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research links - Internationalisation - Equality - External collaboration (third-stream activities) and links to working life - Sustainable development - Student influence and student-centred learning - Development areas identified in the Student Union Report (Activity 2). <p>The New Student Survey is aimed at new students while the Student Barometer is primarily aimed at students studying in semester 5 on programmes, or those who have studied at least 120 higher education credits.</p> <p>Deans⁹ are responsible for the distribution and collection of surveys. The Planning Office is responsible for distributing data at the university and faculty level and for analysing data for the university level.</p> <p>Deans are responsible for ensuring that further processing of the faculty's collected data is performed and forwarded to departments and programmes.</p>
Dialogue, remedial measures and feedback	<p>Information on remedial measures and the systematic work with the surveys is compiled and commented on based on directives given in the annual reports and operational plans of the programmes, departments and faculties, and is included in operational dialogues. The same procedure applies to the University Administration and the University Library.</p>
Timetable	<p>New Student Survey: September every two years. Data is compiled within three months. Student Barometer: October every two years. Data is compiled within three months.</p>

⁸ Throughout the document, in relevant cases, faculty also refers to the Umeå School of Education.

⁹ Throughout the document, in relevant cases, Dean also refers to the Dean of the Umeå School of Education.



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

Related governing documents and templates	Instructions for follow-up of the operating year (from the Vice-Chancellor, as well as corresponding faculty, University Administration and University Library documents). Definitions of university-wide perspectives within education.
Main stakeholders	Programmes, departments, faculties, the University Administration, the University Library and USR.
B. Surveys for third-cycle courses and degree programmes	
Responsible function/s	Office for Human Resources FOSTRA
Implementation	<p>The Employee Survey is aimed at all employees, including doctoral students, and focuses on employees' experience of their work environment. The results for the doctoral student group are compiled by the Office for Human Resources and distributed to the respective faculty.</p> <p>The Postgraduate Exit Survey is aimed at those who have successfully defended their doctoral thesis and is distributed by the Planning Office. For the design of the questionnaire, see section above.</p>
Dialogue, remedial measures and feedback	<p>Employee Survey: The faculty is responsible for the further processing of the results for the doctoral student group.</p> <p>Postgraduate Exit Survey: The Planning Office is responsible for distributing data at the university and faculty level and for analysing data for the university level. The Deans are responsible for ensuring that further processing of their faculty's collected data is performed and forwarded to departments and programmes.</p> <p>Data at the university level is communicated to the University Administration and the University Library.</p> <p>Information on remedial measures and the systematic work with the surveys is compiled and commented on based on directives given in the annual reports and operational plans of the departments and faculties, and is included in operational dialogues. The same procedure applies to the University Administration and the University Library.</p>
Timetable	<p>The Employee Survey is conducted every three years.</p> <p>The Postgraduate Exit Survey is distributed throughout the year around three weeks after a thesis defence. Results are compiled every two years.</p>
Related governing documents and templates	Instructions for follow-up of the operating year (from the Vice-Chancellor, as well as corresponding faculty, University Administration and University Library documents).
Main stakeholders	Departments, faculties, the University Administration, the University Library, and FOSTRA.



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

ESG 1.1, 1.7, 1.9



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

Activity 2: Student Union Report

Background and purpose

The Student Union Report is compiled jointly by the Student Unions every three years and covers courses and degree programmes at all levels.

The Student Union Report gives the Student Unions the opportunity to express their views on the University's activities and bring up issues that the Unions see as important to collaborate with the University on. The Student Union Report is a way of working to ensure that the students take an active part in the work with further developing courses and degree programmes.

Responsible function/s	The Student Unions
Implementation	<p>The Student Unions jointly prepare the Student Union Report, which is then submitted to the Vice-Chancellor.</p> <p>The Student Union Report relates to the results of the student surveys where possible. Areas for potential development identified in the Student Union Report form the basis for the design of student surveys (Activity 1).</p>
Dialogue, remedial measures and feedback	<p>The Student Unions present their report to USR and FOSTRÅ.</p> <p>The Student Unions are responsible for informing Deans about issues that the students consider to be particularly relevant to their respective faculty. Deans are responsible for prioritising a number of areas for further development work in consultation with their respective Student Unions, communicating these priorities to departments and programmes and maintaining a continuous dialogue on the progress of the work with the Student Union.</p> <p>Information on remedial measures and the systematic work with the Student Union Report is compiled and commented on based on directives given in the annual reports and operational plans of the programmes, departments and faculties, and is included in operational dialogues. The same process applies to the University Administration and the University Library.</p> <p>The Student Unions provide annual feedback on their perceptions of the progress of the work in their dialogue with the University Management.</p>
Timetable	The Student Union Report is produced every three years.
Related governing documents and templates	<p>Description of Procedures relating to the Student Union Report (the document is owned by the Student Unions jointly).</p> <p>Instructions for follow-up of the operating year (from the Vice-Chancellor, as well as corresponding faculty, University Administration and University Library documents).</p>
Main stakeholders	The University Management, University Administration, University Library, faculties, departments, programmes, and students at all levels.



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

ESG 1.3, 1.7



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

Activity 3: Course Evaluations

Background and purpose

Course evaluations are the basis for continuous improvement and development of courses and programmes.¹⁰ Course evaluations are a way of gathering information on students' and teachers' views and experiences of a specific course. Course evaluations also give students the opportunity to reflect on their own learning process and take an active role in developing courses.

Course evaluations are based on students' individual course feedback surveys as well as on the views and experiences of the course as communicated by others, especially the teachers involved.

Responsible function/s	Heads of Department
Implementation	<p>A course evaluation must be conducted for all courses at all levels. Student course feedback surveys, together with the views and reflections of teachers and staff, form the basis for the course evaluation. A course evaluation shall address the course content and preconditions, and describe how learning activities and examination elements ensure that students are provided with the proper conditions to achieve the expected learning outcomes (FSR). For third-cycle courses that do not have a syllabus, the evaluation is related to the national qualitative targets for the course in question. If a course is divided into different freestanding modules that are several weeks in scope, the evaluation should deal with each module separately as well as the course as a whole.</p> <p>The course coordinator determines how the course evaluation is to be carried out. Students should be given the opportunity to participate in the planning, implementation and follow-up of course evaluations.</p> <p>Students have the right to submit their comments anonymously. Teachers must consider individual students' right to anonymity, for example, by anonymising their comments before the responses are published. Opinions and comments containing personal attacks and abusive judgments shall not be taken into account and can be reported.¹¹</p> <p>Course evaluations shall, where relevant, take into account and enable the analysis of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research links - Internationalisation - Equality - External collaboration (third-stream activities) and links to working life - Sustainable development - Student influence and student-centred learning <p>Individual courses and student course feedback surveys need not encompass all of the above perspectives. However, the course evaluation must include all perspectives.</p>

¹⁰ The requirement for course evaluations to be carried out and compiled and for the results and remedial measures taken to be communicated to and made available to the students is stipulated in Chapter 1, Section 14 of the Higher Education Ordinance.

¹¹ See the document Administrative Procedures for Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying.



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

Dialogue, remedial measures and feedback	<p>A course evaluation must include an analysis that results in conclusions and any suggestions for remedial measures. The course evaluations and decisions on remedial measures shall be communicated as feedback to students and the relevant programmes. Course evaluations shall be made easily accessible to students and teachers.</p> <p>Information on the systematic work with course evaluations is compiled and commented on based on directives given in the annual reports and operational plans of the programmes and the departments, and is included in operational dialogues.</p> <p>Course evaluations are to be saved in accordance with Umeå University's Document Management Plan.¹²</p>
Timetable	Course evaluations are conducted shortly after the end of a course. Decisions on remedial measures are made on an ongoing basis.
Related governing documents and templates	The faculty's directives for annual reports and operational plans.
Main stakeholders	Programmes, departments, faculties, doctoral students, supervisors, current and prospective students
ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8	

¹² See the Document Management Plan for first and second-cycle education at Umeå University FS 1.1-914-16.



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

Activity 4: Programme Evaluation

Background and purpose

All programme students shall be given the opportunity to express their views on the programme as a whole.¹³

Programme evaluations are a way of gathering information on students' and teachers' views and experiences of a specific degree programme. They also give students the opportunity to reflect on their own learning process and take an active role in developing the programme. Programme evaluations are aimed at improvement and development of programmes.

The compilation and analysis of programme evaluations is done in Activity 6, Annual Reports and Operational Plans for Degree Programmes and Third-Cycle Subject Areas.

Programme evaluation at the first and second-cycle levels

<p>Responsible function/s</p>	<p>Faculty Boards</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	<p>All programmes at the first and second-cycle levels are to be regularly evaluated. In addition to students, teachers and other staff involved in the teaching should be given the opportunity to express their views.</p> <p>The programme coordinator determines how the programme evaluation is to be carried out. Students will be given the opportunity to participate in the planning, implementation and follow-up of programme evaluations and have the right to submit their comments anonymously. Teachers must observe individual students' right to anonymity, for example, by anonymising their comments before the responses are distributed to student groups. Opinions and comments containing personal attacks and abusive judgments shall not be taken into account and can be reported.¹⁴</p> <p>Programme evaluations shall address the programme content, the programme's progression in relation to the national qualitative targets and programme-specific conditions.</p> <p>In addition, programme evaluations are to take into account and enable the analysis of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research links - Internationalisation - Equality - External collaboration (third-stream activities) and links to working life - Sustainable development - Student influence and student-centred learning

¹³ For third-cycle education, refer to Activity 6 in this regard.

¹⁴ See the document Administrative Procedures for Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying.



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

Dialogue, remedial measures and feedback	Programme evaluations form a basis for the programme's annual report/operational plan (see Activity 6). Feedback to the main stakeholders is provided through the annual reports/operational plans.
Timetable	On an ongoing basis, or shortly after the end of a programme.
Related governing documents and templates	The faculty's directives for the annual report and operational plan. Definitions of university-wide educational perspectives.
Main stakeholders	Programmes and current students
ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.9	



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

Activity 5: Achieving of National Qualitative Targets

Background and purpose

It is incumbent on Umeå University to show that students who have obtained a first or second-cycle degree have achieved the respective degree's national qualitative targets. The qualitative target matrix serves as an internal tool for systematic planning, design and analysis of first and second-cycle courses and programmes and as a tool for ensuring that they progressively reach the national qualitative targets. The qualitative targets for third-cycle courses and programmes are followed up through the students' individual study plans and the routines that apply to the public defence of doctoral theses.

Compilation and analysis of the national qualitative targets are carried out in Activity 6, Annual Reports and Operational Plans for Degree Programmes and Third-Cycle Subject Areas.

A. Qualitative targets for first and second-cycle courses and degree programmes

Responsible function/s	Faculty Boards
Implementation	<p>A qualitative target matrix is established for each degree, showing the relationship between the national qualitative targets and the course objectives expressed as intended learning outcomes. The matrix specifies which intended course objectives correspond to a specific national target. The national targets are broken down further if necessary to show how the national qualitative targets are progressively covered by the courses included in the degree.</p> <p>Teaching activities and examinations are designed so as to ensure that students have achieved specific course objectives upon receiving a passing grade. This is ensured via the course syllabi and is followed up in the course evaluations, see Activity 3. For more relating to goal attainment, see activities 4, 6 and 7. The degree project is of particular importance in ensuring that a student has achieved the requirements for a degree.</p>
Dialogue, remedial measures and feedback	The qualitative target matrix constitutes a basis for the degree programmes' annual reports/operational plans (see Activity 6).
Timetable	A review and possible revision of the qualitative target matrix are carried out annually.
Related governing documents and templates	The faculties' template for the annual report/operational plan.
Main stakeholders	Programmes, departments, faculties, students



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

B. Qualitative targets for third-cycle courses and programmes	
Responsible function/s	Faculty Boards
Implementation	<p>A qualitative target matrix is produced for each doctoral student and is included in the individual study plan. The matrix clarifies the link between the student's degree of activity in the third-cycle studies and the qualitative targets in the general syllabus, and shows how the national and local qualitative targets are met.</p> <p>Through follow-ups and revisions of each doctoral student's individual study plan, the matrix is reviewed and revised. Deviations from the normal progression are documented in the individual study plan.</p> <p>The role of the external reviewer in a public defence of a doctoral thesis is to critically review the thesis and to discuss it thoroughly with the author. The examining committee's task is to critically review and examine the thesis and its defence with regard to the relevant national qualitative targets, while the remaining targets are examined by an examiner. The role of the grading committee in a licentiate seminar is to assess the licentiate thesis and its defence with regard to the relevant national qualitative targets. An examiner makes an overall assessment of all national targets.</p>
Dialogue, remedial measures and feedback	<p>The qualitative target matrix constitutes a basis for the third-cycle subject area's annual report/operational plan (see Activity 6).</p> <p>After a public defence of a doctoral thesis, the examining committee meets and gives its decision. In the case of a licentiate seminar, the grading committee meets and makes a recommendation to the examiner who then makes a decision.</p>
Timetable	<p>Annually.</p> <p>Continually in connection with public defences of a doctoral thesis</p>
Related governing documents and templates	<p>Regulations for Third-Cycle Education at Umeå University.</p> <p>The faculties' template for the annual report/operational plan.</p> <p>Templates/instructions for examining committees and external reviewers.</p> <p>General syllabus.</p>
Main stakeholders	Doctoral students, supervisors, departments and faculties.
ESG 1.2, 1.3, 1.8	



Activity 6: Annual Reports and Operational Plans for Degree Programmes and Third-Cycle Subject Areas

Background and purpose

The annual report included in Activity 6 is aimed at compiling and analysing the information and data generated in Activity 1-5 and Activity 7. Activity 6 also includes follow-up of previous years' annual reports and operational plans.

The operational plan included in Activity 6 aims at identifying measures for the development of degree programmes and third-cycle subject areas based on the analysis in the annual report.

<p>Responsible function/s</p>	<p>Faculty Boards and Heads of Department</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	<p>The annual report and the operational plan are aimed at following up and developing degree programmes and third-cycle subject areas.</p> <p>The programme's annual report contains an analysis of how the programme systematically integrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research links - Internationalisation - Equality - External collaboration (third-stream activities) and links to working life - Sustainable development - Student influence and student-centred learning <p>The annual report's analysis is also based on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student surveys (see Activity 1) - The Student Union Report (see Activity 2) - Course evaluations (see Activity 3) - Programme evaluations (see Activity 4) - Achieving national qualitative targets (see Activity 5) - Previous years' annual reports and operational plans for degree programmes and third-cycle subject areas (see Activity 6) - Educational evaluations through external peer review (see Activity 7) - Other relevant educational evaluations, for example those conducted by the Swedish Higher Education Authority - Statistics, for example on student completion and widened participation - Follow-ups of individual study plans are also included for third-cycle subject areas - If necessary (according to directives from the Faculty Board), follow-ups in respect of what is stated in Quality Requirements for Degree Programmes and Main Fields of Study¹⁵

¹⁵ See appendix 2 or 3.



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

	<p>The operational plan describes which quality-enhancing measures the programme or third-cycle subject area will focus on in the coming year.</p> <p>The annual report/operational plan for first and second-cycle degree programmes is a separate document designed in accordance with the faculties' directives. Annual reports/operational plans for third-cycle subject areas are included in the departments' annual reports/operational plans.</p>
Dialogue, remedial measures and feedback	<p>The annual reports/operational plans constitute a basis for operational dialogues.</p> <p>The faculties are responsible for making their annual reports/operational plans available online.</p>
Timetable	<p>For first and second-cycle degree programmes, an annual report and operational plan are prepared on a yearly basis.</p> <p>For third-cycle subject areas, an annual report/operational plan is prepared in accordance with the faculty's operating cycle.</p> <p>Every three years, Quality Requirements for Degree Programmes and Main Fields of Study must be specifically taken into account.¹⁶</p>
Related governing documents and templates	<p>The faculties' directives for the degree programmes' and departments' annual reports/operational plans.</p> <p>Regulations for Third-Cycle Education.</p> <p>Quality Requirements for Degree Programmes and Main Fields of Study.</p>
Main stakeholders	<p>Programmes, students, doctoral students, departments, faculties, external peer reviewers, external actors.</p>
ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8	

¹⁶ Se appendix 2.



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

Activity 7: Educational Evaluation through External Peer Reviews

<p>Background and purpose The purpose of external peer reviews is to help ensure the quality of the content and implementation of degree programmes and provide support for quality development.</p>	
<p>A. Peer reviews of first and second-cycle programmes</p>	
Responsible function/s	Faculty Boards
Implementation	<p>Reviews are based on Quality Requirements for Degree Programmes and Main Fields of Study¹⁷. The faculty assesses which parts are suitable for inclusion in a peer review. The evaluation is based on the programme syllabus, the qualification descriptor, the degree programme's annual report/operational plan (Activity 6) for recent years, and other material specified by the faculty.</p> <p>The review is carried out by an external expert.¹⁸ The Dean appoints a reviewer after consultation with the programme concerned. Students shall be offered the chance to participate in the planning of the review.</p>
Dialogue, remedial measures and feedback	The reviewer summarises their assessment and recommendations in a report in accordance with the faculty's instructions. The review should highlight both identified strengths and development areas. The review report forms the basis for the programme's annual report/operational plan, which is handled in accordance with Activity 6.
Timetable	Each degree programme is evaluated through peer review at least every six years according to the faculty's timetable. The timetable is co-ordinated with the Swedish Higher Education Authority's educational evaluations.
Related governing documents and templates	Quality Requirements for Degree Programmes and Main Fields of Study.
Main stakeholders	Programmes, students, departments, and faculties
<p>B. Peer reviews of third-cycle programmes</p>	
Responsible function/s	Faculty Boards
Implementation	Every six years, the Faculty Board initiates an analysis of the annual reports and operational plans of third-cycle subject areas for recent years. The analysis is to be carried out by an expert within the disciplinary research domain or a director of PhD studies from outside the department under review.

¹⁷ See appendix 2.

¹⁸ External refers to outside the department responsible for the programme.



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

Dialogue, remedial measures and feedback	The reviewer summarises their assessment and recommendations in a report in accordance with the faculty's instructions. In the review, both identified strengths and development areas are to be highlighted. The review report forms the basis for the programme's operational plan, which is handled under Activity 6.
Timetable	Each third-cycle programme is evaluated through peer review at least every six years according to the faculty's timetable. The timetable is adapted to the Swedish Higher Education Authority's educational evaluations.
Related governing documents and templates	Administrative Procedures for Introducing, Discontinuing and Changing the Name of a Third-cycle Subject Area or Specialisation at Umeå University.
Main stakeholders	Third-cycle subject areas, departments and faculties.
ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.9	



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

Activity 8: Faculty Audits

<p>Background and purpose</p> <p>Faculty audits are aimed at developing the quality work of a University body based on collegial views and recommendations, thus contributing to a more open quality culture, new knowledge and mutual learning. The audits are focused on how a faculty, the Umeå School of Education or a selected administrative unit organises and supports courses and programmes and develops their quality.</p>	
<p>Responsible functions/s</p>	<p>USR FOSTRA</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	<p>In consultation with USR and FOSTRA, members of the university management team responsible for educational matters appoint an audit group. The following functions should normally be represented in the audit group: students, pro dean/vice deans with educational responsibilities, heads of dean's office, university teachers with a merit-based salary increment, directors of study, examiners, postgraduate studies administrators, faculty programme directors, representatives from UPL and administrators from the Planning Office. The audit group can beneficially be supplemented with a representative from another higher education institution and an industry representative.</p> <p>Constant audit themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organisation of, and support for, courses and programmes at all levels - The body's quality work concerning courses and programmes at all levels <p>Additional themes can be determined in consultation between the management of the body in question and the audit group. The audited body decides, in consultation with the audit group, what material is to be included in the audit. The audit does not include self-evaluations.</p> <p>The audit group holds group discussions (site visits) with a number of different staff categories as well as with students at the audited body. The body being reviewed is responsible for making arrangements with those who are to take part in the discussions.</p>
<p>Dialogue, remedial measures and feedback</p>	<p>The audit group writes a report which is submitted to the Dean (or equivalent) of the audited body. The report summarises what has emerged from the review of various documents and discussions with different staff categories and students. Both identified strengths and development areas are to be highlighted in the audit report. The Dean (or equivalent) must be given the opportunity to comment on a preliminary version of the report before the final report is submitted and presented to USR and FOSTRA.</p> <p>Analyses of the audit report and proposed remedial measures are commented on in the audited faculty's (or equivalent's) annual report/operational plan and form the basis for operational dialogues.</p>
<p>Timetable</p>	<p>Annually according to a rolling schedule so that every faculty, the Umeå School of Education or a selected administrative unit is reviewed every six years.</p>



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

Related governing documents and templates	The faculties' directives for the departments' annual reports/operational plans.
Main stakeholders	Faculties, departments, students, doctoral students, programmes, third-cycle subject areas
ESG 1.1, 1.7	



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

Activity 9: Follow-Up and Evaluation of the Quality System

<p>Background and purpose Through internal monitoring and external evaluation, continuous development and renewal of Umeå University's quality system is achieved.</p>	
<p>Responsible function/s</p>	<p>Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ) USR, FOSTRA</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	<p>Umeå University's quality system undergoes external reviews through UKÄ's educational evaluations, thematic evaluations and audits of the University's quality assurance work. The process for these evaluations is set out in UKÄ's guidelines. For Umeå University's internal process in connection with UKÄ's educational evaluations, see special administrative procedures.¹⁹</p> <p>In order to link Umeå University's quality work more closely with the strategic management of the University's activities, annual dialogue meetings are held between the University Management, faculties and the student unions, focusing on quality issues. The purpose of quality dialogue meetings is to reassure the University Management that the quality work is appropriate and in accordance with the University's quality system. The dialogue meetings form the basis for follow-ups of the quality system for education, which are compiled in an annual report and submitted to the University Board. In addition to annual dialogue meetings focusing on quality issues, a number of faculty dialogue meetings are held with selected themes of importance to educational quality.</p> <p>USR and FOSTRA annually monitor the appropriateness and design of the activities included in the quality system. The audit report provides an important basis for this work.</p>
<p>Dialogue, remedial measures and feedback</p>	<p>The Planning Office is responsible for analysing results from UKÄ's evaluations at the university level and for proposing system-wide remedial measures. The faculties are responsible for analysing the results of the review and for taking remedial measures to improve programmes within their respective areas. The results of UKÄ's reviews are made available through internal and external communication channels.</p>
<p>Timetable</p>	<p>See UKÄ's timetable. Operational dialogue meetings according to a yearly cycle.</p>
<p>Related governing documents and templates</p>	<p>UKÄ's guidelines and templates. Administrative Procedures for External Educational Evaluations (UKÄ).</p>
<p>Main stakeholders</p>	<p>Employees, students, the general public</p>

¹⁹ Administrative Procedures for External Educational Evaluations (UKÄ)



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

ESG 1.10



Appendix 1

European standards and guidelines

ENQA, The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, is a European network aimed at promoting the quality assurance of higher education. ENQA has developed common standards and guidelines for how higher education is to be quality assured. These are called ESGs (European Standards and Guidelines) and they play an important role in UKÄ's quality assurance system. Umeå University's quality system for education ensures that the University adheres to the ESGs.

Below is a brief description of the ESGs with short comments on how Umeå University meets each standard.

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Standard: Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.

Comment: Umeå University's quality system for education supports both quality development and quality assurance. The system encompasses all organisational levels and involves both staff and students. The quality system creates the requisite conditions for the strategic management of Umeå University and contributes to a strengthened quality culture. Umeå University's regulations are part of the quality system.

1.2 Design and approval of programmes

Standard: Institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programmes. The programmes should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme should be clearly specified and communicated, and refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

Comment: Umeå University has administrative procedures for introducing, revising, suspending or discontinuing a course, programme, main field of study or local qualification descriptor, as well as administrative procedures for introducing, discontinuing, and changing the name of a third-cycle subject area or specialisation. Monitoring and development of courses and programmes are pursued in accordance with the quality system's activities and associated regulations.

1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

Standard: Institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.

Comment: Students have the right to be represented when decisions or preparations are made that are relevant to their courses or programmes, the students' situation or study conditions at Umeå University. They are represented in a number of bodies where educational issues are discussed from a strategic perspective. They have the right to take an active role in the planning and implementation of courses or programmes and the formation of learning processes and assessments. Students are given the opportunity to comment on the teaching and its implementation in the form of course and programme evaluations and other surveys. The students can also raise questions and put forward opinions via the Student Union Report.



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

Standard: Institutions should consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student “life cycle”, i.e. student admission, progression, recognition and certification.

Comment: Umeå University has clear governing documents and processes for admission, examination and certification. In their annual reports, the programmes describe and analyse the content and progression of the programme in relation to the national qualitative targets.

1.5 Teaching staff

Standard: Institutions should assure themselves of the competence of their teachers. They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff. Teachers who are employed have high scientific and pedagogical competence within their field.

Comment: Umeå University’s recruitment process guarantees transparency and legal security in the hiring of teaching and research staff. Teachers at Umeå University are allocated time for research and artistic development work, for following developments within their own subject area, or for other kinds of competence development. Umeå University’s model for the acquisition of pedagogical qualifications is aimed at stimulating, rewarding and highlighting the teachers’ pedagogical competence. There is a competence development plan for each employee and each department or unit has a competence provision plan. Teachers’ pedagogical development is supported by the Centre for Educational Development.

1.6 Learning resources and student support

Standard: Institutions should have appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and ensure that adequate and readily accessible learning resources and student support are provided.

Comment: In addition to various forms of support such as study guidance, learning support, student counsellors and other advisory or support staff, students at Umeå University also have access to study support in the form of appropriate digital learning resources. Umeå University is constantly modernising existing facilities with the aim of increasing access to creative learning environments where students and teachers can engage in high-quality teaching and learning. Internet-based teaching and flexible learning are important parts of the University’s long-term goal of providing high-quality education that is available regionally as well as globally. The learning environments and the teaching are designed with consideration to accessibility and equal opportunities perspectives. The students also have access to an adequate number of researchers, seminars, visiting lecturers etc. The learning environment and the study situation are monitored through, for example, student surveys and dialogues with the Student Unions.

Information management

Standard: Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.

Comment: Through the activities in Umeå University’s quality system, information is gathered on the students’ and teachers’ experience and views of courses and programmes. The information is analysed in the programmes’ annual reports. Quality dialogue meetings serve to reassure the University Management that the quality work is appropriate and in accordance with the University’s quality system.

Public information

Standard: Institutions should publish information about their activities, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible.



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

Comment: Umeå University compiles and disseminates information on the programmes it offers through external and internal channels. The information contains up-to-date information about the programmes and other information of importance for the students' choice of programme, such as the results of external quality reviews.

1.9 Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes

Standard: Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned.

Comment: Umeå University's programmes are monitored and reviewed to ensure that students achieve established targets. Courses are followed up through course evaluations. Qualitative target matrices serve as a basis for ensuring that the programmes progressively reach the national qualitative targets. This is reported and analysed in the programmes' annual reports and operational plans. Finally, a peer review is carried out where an external reviewer audits the entire programme. The qualitative target matrix for third-cycle education is followed up through the individual study plans and the routines that apply to public defences of doctoral theses.

1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance

Standard: Institutions should undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis.

Comment: Umeå University works in a structured way with the reviews and feedback that are included in UKÄ's national quality assurance system: educational evaluations, audits of the university's quality assurance work, thematic evaluations and appraisals of degree-awarding powers. In addition, the University's quality system includes activities with elements of external review, i.e. faculty audits and educational evaluations with external peer review.



Appendix 2

Quality Requirements for Degree Programmes and Main Fields of Study – First and Second-Cycle

Umeå University is committed to offering high-quality education. Introducing new degree programmes and main fields of study is a long-term undertaking and a university-wide concern.²⁰ Examining applications for new degree programmes and main fields of study in a systematic and uniform way is therefore an important part of the University's quality work. The quality requirements **pertaining to** the introduction of new degree programmes are regularly followed up on through Umeå University's quality system for education.

An application with a clear motivation for the proposed programme and a description of how the quality requirements are to be met forms the basis for the vice-chancellor's introduction decision. Applications must include comments on all of the aspects below. The requirements are based on the Higher Education Act and Higher Education Ordinance, and on Umeå University's own quality requirements. Applications for degree programmes must be supplemented with a proposed programme syllabus.²¹ If a new local system of qualifications is required, a proposed qualification descriptor must be attached.²²

Application and follow-up²³

(Keep text in italics. Add text under the "Comments" heading. Switch out "programme" for "main field of study" where applicable.)

1. Name, content, and structure

State the programme's name in Swedish and English. Give an overview of the purpose, structure, and content of the programme. Also describe how the programme is organised in terms of management and support.

Define and delimit the main field of study/specialisation of the programme.

Comment:

2. The programme's strategic importance to Umeå University

Describe the place the programme will occupy in Umeå University's range of courses and programmes. Specify any relevant proximity and similarities to other programmes at the University, possible consequences to other faculties/departments, and whether any existing courses or programmes will be cancelled as a result of the introduction of the new programme. Relate the programme to similar programmes at other universities.

Give an estimate of the expected number of applicants, intended size, and long-term sustainable funding of the programme. For inter-faculty programmes, account for any agreements between faculties, or between Umeå University and other universities, organisational as well as financial in nature.

Comment:

²⁰ See Administrative procedure for introducing, revising, suspending or cancelling a programme, main field of study, or local system of qualifications.

²¹ According to programme syllabus regulations at Umeå University.

²² According to the [qualification descriptor templates](#) used by Umeå University.

²³ See specifically activities 1, 3, 4, 6, and 7.



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

3. The programme is based on adequate teaching competence

Describe to what degree teachers and other staff intended to participate in the programme as a collective possess the subject competence, academic and pedagogical competence, and knowledge of the demands that will be made of students in their future working lives. For vocational education and training, the competence of the teachers should be taken into special consideration. Show that there is teaching competence to cover points 4-10 below. Describe the availability of teachers and how this compares to the scope and structure of the programme, in order to ensure long-term continuity. Specify any needs for professional development among existing teachers and any need for new recruitments.

Comment:

4. Students can influence planning and implementation

Describe how the programme will help students take an active part in the work of developing the programme. Explain how the structure and examination of the programme will help students take an active part in the learning process.

Comment:

5. The programme is offered in a suitable educational environment with suitable teaching methods

Describe the need for and access to special premises, equipment, and/or other infrastructure needed to meet the programme's needs. State whether measures are needed to improve accessibility. If the teaching takes place outside of Umeå University, describe the social and physical study environment there. If the programme, partially or wholly, takes place online, describe the special conditions of the programme.

Explain the pedagogical structure of the programme, and how this aligns with the educational environment and teachers' competence.

Comment:

6. The programme has an academic/artistic foundation

First and second-cycle education at Umeå University being linked to research means that it rests on an academic foundation, while artistic research is based on artistic processes and activities. Students are given insights into contemporary, relevant research. Upon graduation they will have generic knowledge and expertise regarding how academic work is carried out. Students are thus able to understand, evaluate, and use academic methodology and knowledge, or theories and methods based on artistic practice. Academically or artistically qualified teachers participate on all levels of the programme, are responsible for methodological elements and the progression therein, and for supervision and examination of degree projects. The results of artistic studies are normally presented both in artistic works and in writing, but can also be presented purely in artistic works. Describe the ways in which the programme has an academic/artistic foundation.

Comment:

7. The programme gives students international perspectives

Describe how the programme allows students to obtain international perspectives. Giving students international perspectives means that there should be an inter-cultural and global dimension to the purpose, content and execution of the programme. Where possible, students may participate in



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

international exchanges. State the degree to which the teaching body has access to international networks which can be utilised by the programme.

Comment:

8. The programme gives students perspectives on sustainable development

Sustainable development is about ensuring that people have the same long-term opportunities for social, financial and environmental living conditions. Describe how the content and execution of the studies contribute to giving students knowledge and skills in sustainable development, so that they upon graduation are able to work to realise the UN's sustainable development goals. Specify the collective knowledge and ability within the teaching body to include a sustainability perspective in their respective subjects.

Comment:

9. The programme has quality-driving cooperation elements

Describe cooperation elements aimed at supporting the programme's development and the students' learning and transition to working life. This can include industry councils, project courses with external parties, or external guest lecturers. If the studies are intended to include placements, give an account of the preconditions for this, access to placement spots, and responsibility for how placements are to be carried out.

Analyse the content and specialisation of the programme in relation to the needs of society and the job market. Assess the job market for students after graduation, today and a few years into the future. State what discussions have been held with industries and job market representatives. Where relevant, comparisons to programmes at other universities can be made.

Comment:

10. The programme implements gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming of a programme helps students act to combat inequality in society. Students are given information during their studies about how power and gender is constructed within the programme's subject field. Describe how equality is integrated into the structure and execution of the programme. This can include the content of the programme, but also dialogues about equality in connection with planning the structure of the programme and in the teaching, the choice of literature and teachers, supervisors, and external lecturers. Describe planned measures which aim to combat inequality in recruitment and student completion. Specify the collective knowledge and ability within the teaching body to reflect on their subjects from an equality perspective.

Comment:

11. The programme ensures goal attainment

Describe how the structure and execution of the programme allow for, and how examinations ensure, students progressively reaching the intended learning outcomes (FSR) and the national qualitative targets.

Comment:



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

Appendix 3

Quality Requirements for Third-Cycle Subject Areas²⁴

Umeå University is committed to offering high-quality third-cycle education. The introduction of new third-cycle subjects and main fields of study is therefore a long-term undertaking and a university-wide concern.²⁵ Examining applications for new third-cycle subject areas in a systematic and uniform way is consequently an important part of the University's quality work. Complete applications must include comments on all of the following criteria and aspects. The criteria are based on the Higher Education Act and Higher Education Ordinance, and on Umeå University's internal quality requirements.

Follow-up

The quality requirements that apply to third-cycle subject areas are regularly followed up on through Umeå University's quality system.

Quality requirements

(Keep text in italics. Add text under the "Comment/description" heading.)

1. Name, contents, and structure

State name of third-cycle subject area in Swedish and English. Describe the content and structure of the subject (general study plan). Describe and give motivations for the scope and delimitations of the subject.

Comment/description:

2. Why is the third-cycle subject area needed?

Describe why the subject area is needed and the place it will occupy in the total range of third-cycle subject areas at Umeå University. Give an account of similarities with other third-cycle subject areas at Umeå University and other universities, specify the consequences that the subject may have for other faculties/departments at the University, and whether some other subject area will be cancelled as a result. Describe how the subject relates to existing first and second-cycle programmes.

Comment/description:

3. How is goal attainment ensured

Describe the third-cycle education process and how the qualitative targets are to be attained.

Comment/description:

4. The subject area gives students international perspectives

Describe how the subject area allows students to obtain international perspectives. Describe how students are able to participate in international exchanges. State the degree to which the body of researchers has access to international networks which can be utilised by the subject area.

Comment/description:

²⁴ Including specialisation of third-cycle subject areas

²⁵ See Administrative procedure for introducing, cancelling, or renaming a third-cycle subject area or specialisation



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

5. The subject area gives students perspectives on sustainable development

Describe how the content and execution of the studies give students knowledge and skills in sustainable development, so that they upon graduation are able to work to realise the UN's sustainable development goals.

State whether there is a need for professional development among the body of researchers with regard to sustainability, and how this need is to be met.

Comment/description:

6. Quality-driving cooperation elements

Describe cooperation elements aimed at supporting the subject area's development and the students' learning and transition to working life.

Comment/description:

7. Relevance to the job market

Assess the job market for students after graduation, today and a few years into the future. State what discussions have been held with industries and job market representatives.

Comment/description:

8. Gender mainstreaming

Describe how equality will be taken into consideration in the studies.

Comment/description:

9. Supervisors' competence

Describe the scientific and pedagogical competence of supervisors and other staff who will participate in the studies. State how the supervisors' collective competence is adequate to ensure that the qualitative targets are attained.

Comment/description:

10. Third-cycle study environment

Describe the students' access to special premises, equipment, an adequate number of research-active persons, seminars, guest lecturers etc. required for students to profit by the studies in a relevant way. State whether measures are needed to improve accessibility.

Comment/description:

11. Size and funding

Give an account of the intended size and the long-term funding of the studies. For inter-faculty third-cycle studies, account for any agreements between faculties. Also, account for any agreements between Umeå University and other universities, organisational as well as financial in nature.

Comment/description: