UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET

Reg. no UFV 2021/2434

Support and Advice for Programme Reviews

The Uppsala University model

Adopted by the Division for Quality Enhancement 20 June 2024

Contents

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide support and advice for planning, implementing and following up programme reviews according to Uppsala University's model. The document is not intended to be read 'cover to cover', but to allow the reader to select the sections of interest. For this reason, there may be some repetition in the text. The document draws on all the experience gained from the University's programme reviews. The advice in the document comes from programme coordinators[1] at different levels and assessors via assessment panel reports, evaluation reports, faculty models and the University's programme review conference. This revised support document builds on the experience and advice shared by so many people involved. The first version of *Advice and tips when planning and implementing programme reviews* was compiled in preparation for the introduction of the model (2017).

After the first cycle of reviews, every faculty has considerable experience of conducting programme reviews and may have experiences that are not covered by this document. It is important to bear in mind that the advice in this document has been given in a particular context, and that different faculties' programme reviews may differ in design and organisation. The advice must therefore be assessed by programme coordinators who decide what is relevant in their own context. It is hoped that the document can provide support in planning, implementing and following up programme reviews at Uppsala University.

Structure

The document starts with a brief summary of the programme review model as set out in the University-wide guidelines and its various components. This is followed by advice on the different stages of the process. Reviews of doctoral programmes and reviews of contract education and freestanding courses have their own sections with some specific advice, but most of what is stated in the other sections is also applicable to these. Appendix 1 provides some advice for assessors. Appendix 2 provides examples of review questions ('idea bank') based on the eleven aspects of the model. One piece of advice, however, is to begin the self-evaluation process by freely formulating review questions based on your own knowledge of the programme and its learning outcomes. This will help you avoid 'drowning' and losing sight of your own programme-related questions. In the next step, you can compare your questions with the questions in the idea bank to ensure you do not miss anything essential.

[1] The term 'programme coordinators' is used in this document for the Swedish term 'utbildningsansvariga', which refers to staff responsible for programmes/education at different levels e.g. programme coordinators, directors of studies, faculty boards or other educational boards.

1. The programme review model

The *Guidelines for the Programme Review Model at Uppsala University* were adopted by the Vice-Chancellor in October 2016 (UFV 2015/475). The Vice-Chancellor adopted revised guidelines in June 2022 (UFV 2021/2434). The proposed guidelines were produced by two successive working groups made up of academic representatives from each disciplinary domain, student representatives and the University Administration, the first of which was led by a vice-rector and the second by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. Comments on the proposals were obtained via internal consultation.

Uppsala University's model sets out from a number of fundamental points: it is decentralised, is based on ongoing quality assurance and quality enhancement, external peer review and collegial working forms, promotes quality and includes student participation, is stringent (able to identify and remedy deficiencies), and is as simple and cost-effective as possible.

The model for programme reviews is based on the responsibility for quality of the disciplinary domain and faculty boards as prescribed in the University's rules of procedure (UFV 2017/95). The responsibility for planning, implementing and following up the results of the programme reviews therefore rests with the relevant board. Each disciplinary domain/faculty has developed its own forms and procedures (models) based on the guidelines.

As set out in the guidelines, the model consists of two components: annual follow-up of programmes and programme reviews every sixth year. The purpose of the programme reviews is to systematically contribute to ensuring and enhancing the quality of the programmes. The aim is to encourage education of the highest national and international quality. The reviews cover all education at Bachelor's level, Master's level and doctoral level (see the footnote in the guidelines).

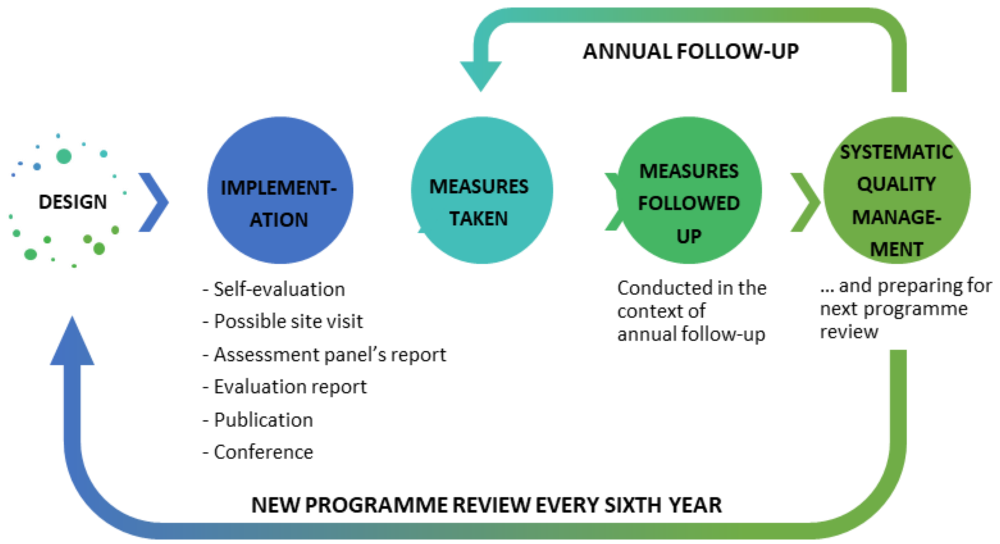

Figure 1. Schematic outline of Uppsala University's programme review model

The model integrates ongoing quality assurance and enhancement and annual follow-up with the programme reviews every six years into a whole that strengthens systematic quality assurance and enhancement.

A programme review consists of the following steps: design, implementation, measures to improve the programme and follow-up of the measures.

1.1 Requirements for the reviews

According to the guidelines (UFV 2021:2434), each programme review includes an external review conducted by at least two peers from one or more other higher education institutions, and by at least one colleague from another faculty at Uppsala University. The external review follows recognised principles of *peer review*, which is an academic form of quality assurance. The programme reviews include student participation in the planning, implementation and follow-up. The assessment panels include one or more students.

The programme reviews must include a comprehensive assessment of the quality of the programme – its strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement.

Each programme review must cover five areas with a total of eleven aspects (see the guidelines). The five areas are:

- Goal attainment, teaching and assessment
- Teaching expertise
- Student participation and student perspective
- Working life and social relevance
- Inclusion, international outlook and sustainability

The educational requirements are ultimately formulated in the System of Qualifications (Annex 2 of the Higher Education Ordinance) and at local level in course and programme syllabuses and general syllabuses. Programme coordinators and examiners are responsible for ensuring that quality requirements are maintained. The programme reviews help ensure favourable conditions for maintaining the requirements.

The reviews include a self-evaluation, an assessment panel’s report, an evaluation report with planned measures and the board’s conclusion. Measures are followed up in the context of annual follow-up.

1.2 Components of the programme review model

This section presents the components of the model with a few examples of what is included in each component. The purpose of this presentation is to provide an overview, while advice and experience can be found in the relevant sections of Chapter 2.

Design

- Identification of unit for review
- Choice of form of review
- Recruitment of external and internal peer reviewers (assessors)
- Contact with student union for task of appointing student representative on assessment panel
- Timetable for the process (self-evaluation, site visit, assessment panel's report, evaluation report)
- Timetable and instructions for assessors
- Internal organisation and timetable for self-evaluation (working group, student participation, teaching staff)
- Identification of review questions and collection of background material for the self-evaluation

Implementation

Self-evaluation

- Self-evaluation process
- Background material for the self-evaluation (and for the assessors)

Site visit

- Pre-meeting, organisation of the site visit
- Interviews with management, teaching staff and students, and possibly alumni
- Own time for assessors to start on the assessment panel's report during the site visit
- Possible feedback meeting at the end of the site visit

Assessment panel's report

- The assessment panel's report on strengths, weaknesses/ areas for improvement and recommendations
- Clarify whether the assessment panel is also requested to provide a summary opinion on the programme as a whole
- Draft assessment panel's report is sent to programme coordinators for correction of any factual errors

Evaluation report

- Written by programme coordinators after receiving the assessment panel's report
- Includes the methodology and organisation of the evaluation, and the name and affiliation of the assessors
- Contains the main conclusions in the light of the self-evaluation and the assessment panel's report
- Contains planned measures

- Is discussed by the disciplinary domain/faculty board, which decides on the board's conclusion, including whether special follow-up is needed

Publication

- Summary assessment panel report and evaluation report/planned measures are published so as to be externally and internally accessible on the University website

Conference

- The University-wide conference on programme reviews is part of the Uppsala University model and is intended to inspire, share results and experiences, and encourage collegial discussions across disciplinary domain and faculty lines for the benefit of work on maintaining and developing educational quality. The conference is intended for programme coordinators at all levels, students' unions, teaching staff, senior faculty administrators and other administrators, and supporting staff in teaching and learning and other functions.

University-wide quality report

- An annual University-wide quality report on programme reviews carried out during the period is compiled, disseminated and published. The purpose of the report is to summarise the findings of the programme reviews and the measures that are planned to give a University-wide overview and contribute to experience sharing in the University. The quality report is presented to the Vice-Chancellor.

Measures

- The planned measures are carried out in accordance with the evaluation report.
- If the board has identified necessary measures with *special follow-up* this is carried out in accordance with the board's decision.
- Provide feedback on the measures taken in response to the programme review to all students in the programme. Also provide feedback on planned measures to the students who have participated in the self-evaluation or in interviews during the site visit and thank them for their contribution.

Annual follow-up

- Measures taken and outstanding following the review must be documented and followed up.
- If a decision has been made on *special follow-up* of necessary measures, this must be done each year by the relevant disciplinary domain/faculty board until the measures are completed or until the course or programme has been discontinued.
- Annual follow-up of quality assurance and enhancement in the programmes is carried out in accordance with the follow-up procedures in the disciplinary domains and faculties. As the programme reviews are based on ongoing systematic quality assurance and enhancement, these ongoing activities should be documented in an appropriate way to facilitate follow-up and organisational memory.
- The disciplinary domains and faculties report to the Vice-Chancellor within the framework of ordinary operational planning and follow-up. The Vice-Chancellor presents an annual summary to the University Board.

New programme review every six years

- A new programme review is carried out in the next review cycle (at least once every six years). The previous programme review can serve as a starting point for the next review.

2. Advice for the review process

2.1 Planning

Timetable

In light of the experiences of programme reviews at the University, a recurrent piece of advice is to plan the programme review well in advance.

Timetable and organisation of the internal process

A timetable needs to be drawn up at an early stage. This includes deciding on the form of the review, e.g. whether it will be done by an assessment panel or by means of a benchmarking-based evaluation.

- Start planning the semester before at the latest. Inform the teaching staff about the review.
- Produce proposals for external and internal assessors well in advance. Assessors need to be appointed and given instructions for their work (see *Appointing assessors, Instructions for assessors*).
- Draw up a realistic timetable. A timetable for the whole process should be in place from the start (recruitment of assessors, self-evaluation including collegial feedback, site visit, assessment panel's report, evaluation report). Set clear deadlines.
- Contact the relevant students' union early to appoint a student to the assessment panel. The student member has often proved the most difficult to recruit. To facilitate the work of the students' union, they need clear information on what the assignment entails and the estimated time required (see *Student member of the assessment panel*).
- Set up a working group, possibly a steering group and a reference group.
- Plan for student participation (e.g. students in the working group) in the internal evaluation. If there is a student council/student association, involve it in the process. Student participation can take many forms (see *Student participation in self-evaluation*). The students' unions appoint student representatives.
- Set aside time in duty plans.
- Ensure that administrative support is available.
- Ensure proper resourcing of costs and compensation.
- Plan for the site visit (see *Site visit*).
- Prepare all those involved (course coordinators, supervisors, heads of department, directors of studies, students, etc.) that they need to be available on the days of the site visit.
- Plan the self-evaluation and take stock of background material (see *Self-evaluation, Background material*).

Several faculties organise an introductory meeting (physical or virtual) where the chair/assessment panel and representatives of the faculty/programme meet to provide the assessors with background information on the programme and the context surrounding the programme. The meeting provides an opportunity to put the review, and the programme, into context and clarify anything that is unclear.

At the planning stage, you can also consider whether you want to have a follow-up meeting with the assessors after the review. Some programme coordinators have scheduled a follow-up meeting or seminar with assessors some time after the review, while others have reflected in retrospect that it would have been valuable. As someone put it, to *"use them a little longer and a little more"*.

Assessors have also declared that the assessment panel *"was never as good as when we said goodbye"*. One possibility could be to use someone from the assessment panel for a longer period of time. Assessors have also indicated that they were curious about how their comments were received and would have liked some feedback afterwards. One way to provide feedback could be to send the evaluation report with planned actions to the assessment panel for their information.

Appointing assessors

Assessors have conveyed that the task is very rewarding and instructive, giving them new perspectives and ideas. It also broadens their networks, involves interesting discussions, and can lead to joint development projects. They consider the assignment valuable for their academic track record.

One piece of advice is to choose assessors with care. In order to achieve a broad perspective, it can be advantageous for an assessment panel to include both individuals with extensive and current teaching experience and people with experience of management tasks such as a director of studies, programme coordinator, head of department or dean. Remember also to take a gender perspective into account when choosing assessors. An international assessor can provide a comparative international perspective on the programme. For a subject that is small from a national perspective, assessors from universities outside Sweden can contribute more of an outside perspective and a freer exchange.

Based on research[2] it is possible to describe a good member of an assessment panel. A good assessor prepares well, is concise, is able to communicate across disciplines, respects the expertise and opinions of other assessors, and recognises the limits of their own knowledge and when an assessment needs to be left to someone better placed to make it. Well-functioning assessment panels maintain a good collegial atmosphere.

- Ask the assessors in good time! Find out who is the right person to ask assessors in the faculty/disciplinary domain.
- Try to obtain assessors who have valuable experience (preferably various management positions so they see the bigger picture) and who also complement each other and can provide multifaceted comments.
- Consider an international assessor to obtain an international perspective on the programme. About half of the programme reviews in the first review cycle have had at least one international assessor, usually from another Nordic or northern European country.
- Provide good conditions for the assessment panel by clarifying what is expected. Provide clear deadlines and instructions.
- It is a good thing if proposed dates for a site visit and a provisional timetable are already available when the request to be an assessor arrives. If possible, set the site visit dates in dialogue with the assessors in connection with requesting their participation. (See *Site visit.*)
- Appoint a convener or chair of the assessment panel. This facilitates the work of the panel and promotes efficiency. Someone needs to convene internal working meetings, liaise with the programme and the faculty, organise the writing of the assessment panel's report, etc. (See *Advice to assessment panel.*)
- Some assessors have commented that a smaller assessment panel can be more efficient than a larger panel (six to eight people).

[2] How Professors Think: Inside the Curious World of Academic Judgement (Lamont, 2009).

- Make sure that the instructions are clear in budgetary terms (time and money).
- If you wish to have a representative from working life on the assessment panel, it is important to facilitate their participation by informing the representative's employer about the purpose and scope of the assignment. In some cases, it has proved difficult for the working life representative to set aside as much time as the other members of the assessment panel, though this issue can be solved by giving them a more limited assignment. So far it has mainly been professional degree programmes that have had a working life representative on the assessment panel.
- There is one example of a programme sharing an assessment panel with programmes at other higher education institutions. This requires good advance planning and that the review systems are reasonably similar. They coordinated a joint alumni survey. Each institution received its own assessment panel report, but the three programmes had a joint feedback meeting with the assessment panel.
- Another possibility is to combine a physical and virtual site visit to allow for a broader assessment panel (e.g. if an international assessor would otherwise not have been able to participate in the review).

Impartiality and consideration of possible conflicts of interest

Any potential conflict of interest should be assessed by a programme coordinator at a higher level than the unit being reviewed.

Under the rules on conflict of interest (disqualification) in the Administrative Procedure Act, a person is disqualified from taking part in the processing of a matter if they can be assumed to be affected by the decision to a not insignificant extent, or if there is some other special circumstance that means that their impartiality in the matter can be questioned. The latter point refers to whether impartiality *can* be questioned (regardless of whether or not it has actually had any influence). In the case of programme reviews, no decisions are taken by the assessment panel; their role is rather to give their opinions and recommendations, which the programme coordinators then have to evaluate and take into account. However, it is in the interest of the programme coordinators that the assessors give their honest views without having any links to the programme that might call their judgement into question. The assessors should be able to comment on the programme from an outside perspective, without feeling bound by loyalty. There should be nothing to hinder a critical view of the programme.

One piece of advice is to be transparent about whether, and in what way, a proposed person has links to the programme. This provides a good basis for those responsible for education at the faculty/disciplinary domain to decide whether or not the proposed person should be considered to be disqualified.

One faculty requested the following written information about proposed assessors from the programme/department:

- Position/role, department and university.
- Reasons for proposing the person (e.g. experience, knowledge and qualities).
- Brief description of the person's relations with the unit being reviewed. Highlight factors that could cause disqualification and explain why they are not relevant. If there are no potential reasons for disqualification, state this.

Teachers responsible for programmes often know many people in their own or neighbouring fields, or through national networks, who could offer new quality-enhancing perspectives on the programme. One way to obtain a proper outside view is to consider an international assessor.

Internal assessor from another faculty

The internal assessor contributes an outside perspective by being a teacher from a programme at another faculty. This exchange of experience across the University has proved to be highly appreciated and is regarded as valuable by the programme and faculty being evaluated as well as the assessor. A mutual exchange takes place, with the internal assessor also bringing ideas back to their own programme and department.

- Many have engaged a distinguished university teacher or educational award winner as an internal assessor. It is also common to ask a director of studies, deputy head of department or someone with similar management experience. The head of department concerned must be informed and is the person who approves the assignment as internal assessor. Employees who have recently attained emeritus status have also taken on such assignments.
- Some faculties appoint the internal assessor as chair or convenor of the assessment panel as they are familiar with the University and physically present.
- There is one example of the internal assessor being specifically tasked with participating in teaching as an observer, in this case of oral examinations.

Student member of the assessment panel

All programme reviews include at least one student in the assessment panels. According to the guidelines, the student member of the assessment panel can be a student from a corresponding programme at another higher education institution, or a student from Uppsala University but from another programme, so that they are independent of the programme being reviewed. The students' unions appoint the student representatives (in accordance with the *Guidelines for student influence* (UFV 2019/1792) and the *Guidance for work on student influence at Uppsala University*).

Students who have been involved in assessment panels have said that they felt they could really contribute to the review (even those who were from a completely different programme within the University). They have found the assignment valuable and instructive. The students have thought it interesting and think they have learned a lot about how a university works. Students who have participated have conveyed that it is important to know what is expected and what will happen in the process, in other words, an introduction to the assignment is important.

- Contact the students' union early on about recruiting a student/doctoral student to the assessment panel. It has not always been easy for students' unions to find students for the assignment in time, so it is important to plan well ahead. If the student is being recruited from an equivalent programme at another higher education institution, this involves contact with that institution's students' union.
- The union needs clear information about what the assignment involves, preferably in the form of a short, bulleted list. To make a decision, students need to know what the assignment involves, the time period (when the assignment starts and ends), what they are actually expected to do, how much time it is expected to take and remuneration. They need to know whether the working language is Swedish or English.
- Offer a certificate issued after the assignment that the student can use in their CV. The assignment can be a useful qualification and provide skills that could be attractive to future employers.

- Some programme reviews have had two students on the assessment panel. They can then be a support to one another in their work.
- Uppsala Student Union has developed support material for student representatives in programme reviews with some tips.

Instructions for assessors

Purpose and instructions

The assessors need instructions for their work. The written instructions may be accompanied by the guidelines and the disciplinary domain/faculty model.

- The purpose of the review and expectations need to be made clear. Similarly, clarify whether the assessors are expected to deliver a comprehensive overall opinion on the programme. It is also possible, for example, to emphasise the importance of collegial discussions during the site visit and the developmental focus of the review, while also asking the assessment panel to be explicit in its report if any serious quality deficiency is deemed to exist.
- Communicate clearly what the unit being reviewed is and whether the assessment is intended to result in one or more reports.
- A timetable for the process should be communicated in dialogue with the assessors (see below).
- Several faculties organise a pre-meeting where the assessors meet representatives from the faculty and the programme to put the assessors in a good position to understand the context in which the programme operates and what is expected of them.
- Programme coordinators have sometimes had a digital pre-meeting with the assessment panel about a month before the site visit. The assessors have then had time to go through self-evaluations and background material, and requests ahead of the site visit have been discussed.
- Ask the assessors to indicate well in advance (give a date) which categories they wish to interview during the site visit.
- Many programmes give assessors a tour of the premises during the site visit and schedule lunches and coffee breaks for more informal discussions with students and teaching staff.
- You could also consider giving assessors an opportunity to observe teaching sessions during the site visit.
- If the assessors are to look at independent work and student responses to assignments, the instructions to assessors should state that this material is to be used only for this purpose, i.e. that it is to be used as material for the programme review and may not be used for other purposes. It may be used on authority business, in this case a programme review, but may not be disseminated or used in any other way as it involves students' rights as authors.
- One faculty has designed a questionnaire linked to the aspects to help the assessors in writing their panel report, asking them to rate and comment on each question. The completed questionnaire has been attached to the assessment panel's report.
- Inform the assessors that their report will be published on the University website.
- Ask the assessment panel to send a draft report for review and feedback on any factual errors or misunderstandings.
- The assessment panel needs to book its own internal meetings (see *Advice to assessment panel.*)

International assessors

International assessors need information about Swedish higher education and about the degree outcomes specified in the Higher Education Ordinance (and objectives in the Higher Education Act).

- The Swedish Higher Education Authority website provides information on Swedish higher education in English (*Governance of higher education*) and in the introductory section of the authority's annual report in English (*An Overview of Swedish Higher Education and Research*). The Young Academy of Sweden has compiled the document *A Beginner's Guide to Swedish Academia*.
- Review whether there are any documents that need to be translated into English.
- Bear in mind that the Language Act prescribes that documentation for decisions must be in the official language Swedish, but can also be translated into English. If the review has been conducted in English and the documentation is therefore in English, documents in Swedish must be produced immediately upon request.

Timetable for assessors

The assessors need a proposed timetable at an early stage. Clear deadlines have been perceived as helpful. These elements may be included, for example:

- An initial meeting between representatives of the faculty and the programme and the assessment panel/chair to introduce the assignment.
- A pre-meeting between programme coordinators and assessors, for example one month before the site visit.
- Deadline for the self-evaluation, i.e. when the panel will receive the self-evaluation.
- Deadline for submitting requests and comments on the organisation of the site visit and the groups they want to interview.
- Date of site visit.
- Deadline for the draft assessment panel's report (for correction of factual errors).
- Deadline for final assessment panel's report.

Units for review and form of review

Unit for review

The relevant disciplinary domain or faculty board ultimately decides how to cluster programmes into units for review in an appropriate way. All programmes must be included in a programme review in one way or another at least once every six years.

The term 'all programmes' refers to all education offered at

- Bachelor's level (degree programmes, main fields of study, subsidiary fields of study, freestanding courses)
- Master's level (degree programmes, main fields of study, freestanding courses)
- doctoral level (subjects, doctoral studies courses)
- access programmes (e.g. foundation year), supplementary teacher training
- contract education
- 'odd courses' (single freestanding courses that are not specifically among the courses required for any degree, e.g. summer courses, contract education or short courses for professionals).

Assessment panel

This is the most common form. An assessment panel is appointed and reviews the programme based on a self-evaluation, background documents and site visit. According to the guidelines, the review must be carried out by at least two external colleagues from other higher education institutions, one internal colleague from another faculty at the University (internal assessor) and at least one student.

Benchmarking-based review

Another way to bring an outside perspective to your own programme is through benchmarking-based review, i.e. by having programme coordinators, some members of the teaching staff and students visit an equivalent programme at another higher education institution and meet the teachers responsible for that programme and students. Comparing a programme and its context with another institution provides an opportunity to reflect on the whole programme in a broader perspective. Some programmes[3] have carried out a benchmarking-based review with another higher education institution in Europe and have found this inspiring and quality-enhancing. The programme visited has often been a role model in some respect.

These reviews also include a self-evaluation, site visit with discussions and interviews, an assessment panel's report and an evaluation report. The benchmarking-based visit has ranged from a half-day and evening to just over two days. Usually four to six people have travelled in the delegation, including teachers and students. In one of the programmes, the first day was devoted to discussions and comparisons of the organisation of the programme, including classroom observation of the sister programme, and the second day to evaluation and interviews. One of the programmes describes there being a clear comparative perspective between the two programmes, with a mutual exchange of experience that gave rise to further cooperation. The difference in academic and administrative cultures raises rather different questions that provide new ideas and perspectives.

One potential challenge in this approach is how to convey insights to – and generate enthusiasm among – those involved in the programme who do not participate in the visit to the sister programme. In addition to involving as many people as possible in the self-evaluation, and in identifying questions to bring to the sister programme visit, a thorough post-visit process is needed after the delegation's return. The delegation must be given good opportunities to communicate its observations to the body of staff who will be involved in analysing what should be done and designing planned measures. It may also be worth considering whether to include someone at faculty level in the delegation to broaden the experience by adding a management perspective.

Advice on international benchmarking-based reviews based on past experience:

- It is important to choose an appropriate discussion partner (sister programme). A reflection from one of the programmes is that it can be extra important to have experienced assessors in a benchmarking-based review, as they have to make an assessment in combination with the benchmarking.
- Conducting an international benchmarking-based review takes more time and is more resource-intensive (travel, hotel, possible translation of documents). It can take time to find an appropriate programme that agrees to participate.
- For practical reasons, try to find an institution that involves short travel time.

[3] Master's Programme in Clinical Pharmacy, Bachelor's Programme in Civil Engineering, Doctoral Programme in Rhetoric. (Two planned benchmarking-based reviews of the Bachelor's and Master's Programmes in Physics had to be changed from physical visits to the institution to digital meetings and interviews due to the pandemic.)

- Apply for grants and explore the possibilities of coordinating the review with research exchanges or similar projects.
- Plan for administrative support in the process, e.g. with regard to booking tickets, hotels.
- Be sure to carefully describe the form and purpose of the review and the Swedish context in the material sent to the sister programme.
- One programme sent a cover letter from the programme coordinator explaining the differences between the education systems (such as the degree outcomes specified in the Higher Education Ordinance), which was sent along with the self-evaluation and background documents. This preparation gave the assessors a very good understanding of the Swedish context. One piece of advice is to think about what the assessors need to be told in order to understand the programme.
- Programme and course documents may need to be translated into English, as may other key policy documents.
- Consider having the self-evaluation edited by a language specialist.
- Ensure that the travelling group is broadly representative.
- Allocate time during the visit to getting to know each other’s programmes and systems. There are differences between education systems. Plan plenty of time for conversations.
- Be sure to ask the sister programme to involve students in the process, preferably as part of the assessment panel, and facilitate meetings with students while there. It is a good idea for them to have read the programme’s self-evaluation in advance.
- One programme suggested to its sister programme that it would be a good idea to have a draft of the assessment panel’s report ready before the benchmarking visit and then complete it after the visit. The point of this was to make the process of producing the report smoother and faster. This worked well.
- It may be worth considering the possibility of having the assessors at the sister programme complement the interviews during the visit with a digital interview with faculty-level managers (if they have not participated in the benchmarking exercise).
- Decide whether the internal assessor should participate in the benchmarking visit. One faculty advises that the whole assessment panel should visit the sister programme (i.e. the assessment panel should not be divided up). In a couple of benchmarking-based reviews, the internal assessor from another faculty did not travel on the benchmarking exercise, but an internal site visit was organised instead where the internal assessor (and student assessor, if absent from the benchmarking exercise) interviewed teachers and students and wrote a supplementary assessment report.

Time required

It is often difficult to estimate the exact amount of time spent on the review, even for the assessors. According to the information available, for example from conferences, members of assessment panels have often spent a little more than one working week on the review, while chairs have put more time into it, around two to three weeks of work. The time required may vary depending on the scale and organisation of the assignment.

The information available on the time spent by the reviewed unit varies from a total of about four weeks of work to about 18 weeks (160 hours to 750 hours), in extreme cases twice as much, but is roughly estimated to be between four and nine weeks of work. This information comes from the first review cycle[4] and the process can be expected to be more resource-efficient when programme reviews are conducted for the second time. The size and form of the review units can influence the time required, and needs and level of ambition can also play a role.

[4] Report from the pilot round of reviews (UFV 2015/475) and Faculty of Social Sciences *Uppföljning av samhällsvetenskapliga fakultetens utvärderingssystem* (Elinder, M., 2021, SAMFAK 2020/49).

2.2 Self-evaluation

Self-evaluation process

Experience of programme reviews shows that the self-evaluation process itself is perceived as a quality driver and as an important part of the quality process. The exercise leads to a comprehensive view of the programme. It provides insights into all the good things that are being done in the programme and gives the teaching staff greater knowledge of each other's courses, helping to identify areas that need development. It enables a systematic exploration of activities and in-depth analysis of the programme in a way that is rarely possible in day-to-day work. The self-evaluation exercise should therefore be organised in a way that involves many people. Involving the whole of the teaching staff increases the chances of evaluations being quality-enhancing and facilitates subsequent efforts to implement measures.

Inform students about the evaluation and its purpose as well. If students are included in the working group, they can take part in the discussions from the outset and in identifying review questions, i.e. what it is important to find out by means of the review. The student group can also make suggestions on what they particularly want to contribute (see *Student participation in self-evaluation*). Be sure to inform and involve international students if there are any in the programme. Contact the students' union well in advance to nominate the students.

Other staff groups can also make a valuable contribution to the self-evaluation process, e.g. student counsellors, course administrators, departmental finance staff, the University Library.

A self-evaluation is most useful if it results in a comprehensive analysis of both strengths and weaknesses. Identifying strengths is important to safeguard what works well in the long term. Programme coordinators and assessors have encouraged programmes in various contexts to be self-reflective and to take the opportunity to dare to foreground weaknesses. This makes it possible to engage the help of the assessors and benefit from their collective knowledge and experience. An awareness of weaknesses and an ability to act and improve are signs of a culture of quality.

The self-evaluation includes identification of review questions and collection of background material about the programme.

One piece of advice is for the working group or teaching staff to begin by formulating their own questions about the programme before checking against all aspects. Otherwise, there is a risk of being so influenced by the aspects that some of your 'own' questions are forgotten.

After that, you can compare your own questions with the '*idea bank'* of potential review questions based on the aspects (appendix 2) to ensure you do not miss anything essential.

Assessors have mentioned that they appreciate a self-reflective and concise self-evaluation with specific examples and analysis. It is useful, for instance, to give specific examples of the chain of goal attainment through constructive alignment. Try to think like an assessor when drafting and reviewing your self-evaluation text. The self-evaluation needs to provide a good overview of the structure, content and organisation of the programme. It could include a description of the line management, division of responsibilities, organisational structure, operating conditions and frameworks. The self-evaluation text should function independently and be understandable without needing to obtain further information, while the appendices provide supplementary data and documentation to support the self-evaluation. References to a large number of appendices without any closer explanation can get in the way of an overview. Documentation should be available to underpin statements made in the self-evaluation (see *Background material*) and the conclusions should build on a solid foundation. Statistics should be accompanied by an analysis.

- Start the self-evaluation in good time! Draw up a timetable. It takes time to produce and analyse material and write the self-evaluation.
- Establish a working group and perhaps a reference group/similar. Enlist the help of programme committees and other teaching staff, organise a drafting team. It is a good idea to involve students in the working group and the writing process.
- Appoint a convener to book meetings and consultations involving the teaching staff and students at an early point.
- Provide clear information about the entire timetable, deadlines, meetings, etc. to everyone involved, specifying when they need to expect to put time into the project (for reading, meetings, etc.).
- Plan how you will go about writing the self-evaluation and whether different constellations will tackle different areas and aspects.
- Draft the self-evaluation over an extended period so as to have time to reflect while putting together material. Collect the background material that is already available and see what you already know. Supplement it with new material as necessary.
- Collect documentation from course coordinators in very good time. Some programme coordinators have collected it in the form of a questionnaire addressed to teachers. Several programmes have asked course coordinators to conduct a self-reflection at course level in which course coordinators assess the need for course development in various areas.
- Dare to be creative and original in the self-evaluation process, talk and listen to teaching staff and students.
- Book a joint day or half-day with the teaching staff and students involved for discussion and feedback on the self-evaluation. Including students and the entire teaching body makes the evaluations a tool for enhancing quality; this is when development occurs.
- Collect documents and material in clearly labelled folders, for example in a shared digital space, such as a collaborative workspace in SharePoint or via Sunet Box (joint web login via Uppsala University). Several people can then work on the same document. The assessment panel can be given access to the folders and the appendices collected there.
- A template for the self-evaluation with headings entered can be helpful.
- Consider limiting the amount of text in the self-evaluation. Assessors appreciate a concise self-evaluation with specific examples.
- Administrative support can be valuable, for example to extract and collate information from course syllabuses, GLIS (the University’s general management system), etc.
- Provide continuous information to all staff during the process.
- Do not plan to write the self-evaluation during the summer months as this makes it difficult to obtain feedback from students and colleagues.
- Document all good ideas that come up during work on the self-evaluation.
- Apply for development funding to be able to put good ideas into practice immediately.

The role of the University Library in the evaluations

The libraries assist in enhancing students’ information skills and contribute to the study environment. The University Library can be involved in the self-evaluation or in interviews when this is considered relevant. The self-evaluation can describe the cooperation between the programme and the library. Questions about information skills and library services can be included in student and alumni surveys. It is a good idea to involve the library in the evaluation. The library welcomes feedback.

2.3 Student participation in self-evaluation

Programme coordinators often highlight student participation as a particularly valuable and quality-enhancing factor. Student participation can take many forms. The guidelines state that students should be involved in the planning, implementation and follow-up of the review. Research confirms that student participation promotes educational quality. Inform students and student councils/associations about the programme review in good time.

Students have a natural role in the self-evaluation, in which they can contribute to the analysis in various ways – both by drafting the self-evaluation alongside teaching staff, programme coordinators, course administrators, etc., and by making their voices heard in material such as interviews, course evaluation reports, student surveys (barometers), alumni studies and other evaluations.

Engage students for participation in the self-evaluation early, for example via student councils and in collaboration with students' unions. Students need to know what the assignment is about and have time to think about it. Ask those who are interested to get in touch with the students' union, which selects the students.

Students who have taken part in programme reviews have encouraged other students to take the opportunity to participate. They report that it has been fun, instructive and positive to have the chance to be involved and influence the programme. They have found it interesting to gain an insight into the organisation and thinking behind components of the programme that are not obvious to students and rewarding to discuss with teachers the strengths and weaknesses of the programme from the students' point of view.

The working group for the self-evaluation has often included two or three students. In some cases, a student who has recently completed their studies in the programme has been a member of the student group.

Tips and advice from students who have participated in self-evaluations

- Clarify what the assignment is about, what the students are supposed to do (a short list of bullet points helps) and how much time it is expected to take.
- Give students who participate in the evaluation a certificate for their contribution that they can use in their CV. Inform them about this in advance. A certificate can attract students to participate as it shows they will get something concrete in return for their efforts at a stage when they do not really know what will be demanded of them.
- In several cases, students have received financial compensation for their work. Financial compensation for participation in a student/working group can help to emphasise the importance of the task. In some cases, doctoral student representatives have been granted a prolongation to compensate for the time they have put into the evaluation.
- The students want to participate in the process as full partners, so remember to inform them about meetings and any joint project day with the teaching staff in good time.
- Remember to explain educational terms and abbreviations in the self-evaluation process.
- Uppsala Student Union has developed support material for student representatives in programme reviews with some tips for focus questions and how to collect other students' opinions about the programme.

- Remember to inform participating students about the outcome and planned measures after the review has been completed, and to thank them for their contributions.

Examples of how students have contributed to the self-evaluation:

- As members of a working group in the self-evaluation process. They have participated in a joint project day with the teaching staff in connection with the drafting of the self-evaluation.
- One student group tackled aspects that specifically focus on students together with a member of the teaching staff in the working group. The student group also participated in the teaching staff's feedback sessions on the self-evaluation as a whole.
- The programme coordinator has had a workshop with students from different parts of the programme to jointly analyse the programme objectives matrix ahead of the self-evaluation.
- In several programme reviews, students have interviewed other students in different years/semesters of the programme (e.g. half-hour interviews). This has provided a student perspective on the programme from students of different ages and genders. In one programme, ten students per year group were interviewed and the results were collated. The student interviews have provided information that has been useful in the self-evaluation and has served as input for the assessment panel.
- A student association has conducted group interviews with students from different years in the programme. This was done in cooperation with a member of the teaching staff. The purpose was to find out about students' perceptions of what works well and what they perceive as problematic.
- The director of studies invited the students for a coffee meeting where the students filled in a questionnaire. The results were used in the self-evaluation.
- In one or two cases, students answered a questionnaire and the results were attached as input for the assessment panel.
- There are also examples of a student group writing a separate report on the programme from a student perspective. The student report was attached to the self-evaluation and sent to the assessment panel.

Other ideas for student participation in the self-evaluation:

- Students could evaluate a certain part of a specific course.
- Students being participants in the evaluation could involve them keeping a diary of their programme for a semester. This could record, for example, contents, activities and assessments in the courses, or aspects such as information, procedures and communication. This could help to build up a broad picture of how the programme might appear to different students (e.g. those with families and young children, international students, etc.).
- Students in a later phase of the programme could attend a teaching session for new students to contribute a more experienced student perspective on the conduct of the teaching session. After the session, the student could give the teacher feedback on what worked well and what aspects of their teaching could be improved or clarified. If the programme uses mentors/SI supervisors, these students' involvement in teaching and learning could be used. The results could be used in the self-evaluation.

2.4 Background material

The self-evaluation must be underpinned by relevant background material that is made available to the assessors. It is advisable to attach a selection of background material to the self-evaluation while making other material available on request. Background material can be made available via a digital space (for example, a group space in SharePoint).

The questions which the programme would like to have answered in the review can often be addressed by analysing existing information, thereby avoiding unnecessary extra work. Start by taking stock of the material that is already available before conducting any supplementary surveys, interviews, etc. Unless radical changes have been made to a programme, survey and interview data and previous evaluations are generally valuable even in cases where they are a few years old.

Having taken stock of existing material, you may have identified some additional material you would like to produce, such as an alumni study or a student survey. Remember that students can be involved in producing material (see *Student participation in self-evaluation*).

Several programmes have chosen to send out a questionnaire to teaching staff and/or course coordinators to obtain information ahead of the self-evaluation. This may be a matter of collecting information about training in teaching and learning, for instance, but could also involve specific examples of how teachers approach various issues in their courses. In some cases, course directors have been asked to make a self-reflective evaluation of their course. They have been asked to assess development needs on a scale, e.g. relating to teaching expertise, course content, teaching and learning methods, student participation and assessments, and then specify which area has highest priority for development, giving a timetable.

You can also consider some form of results-related material for the assessment panel, for example a selection of independent projects, exams and assessments, as well as participant observation of teaching.

In many programmes, independent projects may be an important expression of results. There are several approaches to calibrating the levels demanded in independent projects:

- let external colleagues review a random selection of independent projects (as in the Swedish Higher Education Authority’s programme evaluations) or a number of representative independent projects based on grades;
- select a number of typical independent projects based on grades, e.g. pass with credit, pass, fail, and discuss the assessment in relation to different grade levels among the teaching staff or with an external colleague;
- let an external colleague participate in assessment and public discussion and examination (but not as an examiner setting a grade).

Similar approaches can be used for other types of assessments, e.g. written examinations and other types of assessed assignments.

If the assessors are to look at independent projects or student responses to assignments, the instructions to assessors should state that this material is to be used only for this purpose, i.e. as material for the programme review. It must not be disseminated or used in any other way as it involves students’ rights as authors.

Here are some examples of background material to which assessors have had access in previous programme reviews, over and above the self-evaluation. Not all programme reviews include all these types of material.

Governance documents

- Programme syllabus
- General syllabus
- Course syllabuses
- Guidelines for supervision at Master's level, guidelines for doctoral education, instructions for licentiate and doctoral theses
- Other relevant governance documents, e.g. model for programme reviews

Constructive alignment and course contents

- Reading lists
- Programme and course descriptions, study guidance, course instructions
- Questionnaire to teaching staff and course coordinators/course directors (see details above)
- Overview of current course offerings in the programme
- Overview of the organisation of the programme concerned
- Timetables
- Objectives matrix/degree outcomes matrix (link between intended degree outcomes and intended course learning outcomes and progression, sometimes including modes of instruction and assessment)
- Assessment criteria
- Instructions for degree project
- SWOT analysis
- Analysis of proficiency training based on responses to student questionnaire
- Analyses of assessment questions and criteria by the teaching staff
- Interviews with teachers
- Information about DiaNa (dialogue for scientists and engineers) – systematic communications training developed at the Faculty of Science and Technology
- Individual study plan template
- Doctoral student handbook
- Programme information, website material
- Programme committee minutes
- Access to e-classroom in Studium, where course material, assignments, etc. are gathered together

Background material that can be characterised as 'results-related'

- Examples of assessed assignments, examinations, seminar questions, lab instructions
- Independent projects (degree projects)
- Independent projects: titles and summaries
- Individual study plans (ISPs) for active doctoral students
- Other selected student projects, for example, portfolios, log books from internships, student responses to assessed assignments

Statistics

- Statistics for a certain time period (e.g. three or five years), for example, student completion, applicants per place, registered students, dropouts, students' course selections, age distribution of students, gender breakdown, etc., along with programme coordinators' analysis of the statistics.
- Documents with analysis of the programme's finances (allowances per student and outcome over a three-year period).

Teaching expertise

- Table showing teachers' expertise, list of teachers, hours taught by each teacher.
- Documentation of continuing professional development among the teaching staff over time, e.g. classroom observations, teaching and learning themes at teaching staff conferences, procedures for introduction of new teachers.

Students' perceptions

- Analysis and/or summaries of course evaluations and course reports during a certain period (for example, three or five years).
- Student surveys, e.g. the student 'barometer' (the questions in the Uppsala University student barometer are related to aspects in the guidelines), questionnaires to first-year students, programme evaluations, the International Student Barometer (ISB), or surveys conducted by students/student associations.
- Compilation/report in which students have interviewed other students in different years/semesters of the programme about their perceptions of the programme.
- Individual or group interviews with students (e.g. active students in different phases of the programme).
- One student group was asked to write a separate report on the programme from a student perspective and this was sent with the programme's self-evaluation.

Alumni and stakeholder views

- Results and analysis of alumni questionnaire
- Interviews with alumni
- Views from stakeholders/labour market representatives (e.g. collected via stakeholder representatives in various bodies, or interviews/surveys, reports/studies)

Other material

- Annual reports/similar and operational plans covering a certain period
- Previous programme review (e.g. review report with conclusions and planned measures)
- Comparisons with similar programmes at other higher education institutions (benchmarking)
- Opinions of any external assessors who have participated in student assessments
- Contracts and agreements (e.g. contract education)

2.5 Site visit

Although the guidelines contain no rules about site visits, those involved in the programmes and the assessors agree that in their experience the site visit and the dialogue that occurs in this connection is very valuable. Programme coordinators have said that the site visit offers new perspectives and sets development processes in motion. Assessors emphasise the value of the site visit for obtaining a more nuanced picture, and that it confers legitimacy and offers opportunities to ask questions arising from the self-evaluation. The personal meeting and collegial dialogue entail added value for the assessors as well, giving them good ideas in return.

Most programme coordinators and assessors prefer an in-person site visit.

The date for the site visit should be announced early in the process, in dialogue with the assessors. Send meeting invitations for the dates concerned to the management and teaching staff.

Pre-meetings ahead of the site visit

- To ensure that the assessment panel can work efficiently and its members are in tune with one another before the site visit, the panel has usually had one or more remote meetings prior to the visit. This gives them a chance to discuss and plan their work and to formulate what they want to get out of the site visit.
- One piece of advice is to arrange a digital pre-meeting between the assessment panel and programme coordinators at least a month before the site visit. At this point, the panel should have had time to study self-evaluations and background material and will be ready to make its requests for the site visit, such as which categories of employees and students they would like to interview.

Advice about arrangements for the site visit

- Plan the site visit in dialogue with the assessors.
- Reserve at least two days for the site visit, allowing time for the assessment panel to draft its report. This saves a lot of time and makes the process of writing the assessment panel’s report more efficient.
- Consider some form of feedback from the assessors to programme coordinators before leaving.
- Ask the assessors to indicate a certain time in advance which categories they would like to interview (see *Interviews with teaching staff, Interviews with students* below).
- Panels have appreciated a joint lunch and coffee meeting with the teaching staff, also a guided tour of the premises (see *Interviews with students*).
- Ensure that programme coordinators and a large part of the teaching staff are available to the panel for supplementary questions throughout the site visit. All teaching staff should be prepared and well-informed about the review.
- Plan administrative support for logistics associated with the panel’s visit, such as making travel arrangements, booking rooms, booking lunches/coffee meetings/dinners (if any), access cards, printing facilities, etc.
- Ask the panel whether they would like time on their own at the start of the site visit to get to know one another and consult before the interviews. This is often the first time the assessment panel meets in real life and it can benefit their work to have some time on their own. In one case the site visit began with the panel members having lunch together on their own.

- Set aside time in the timetable for the panel's internal work. Ensure there is a room where they can work, with coffee, food, snacks and water. The panel may appreciate having dinner together on their own and this can be an efficient stage of their work.
- Schedule adequate breaks between the interviews to give the assessors time to digest their impressions. Some assessment panels have been allotted about an hour to themselves after each group interview, others have had half an hour.
- You can consider setting aside time during the site visit for the assessors to attend teaching sessions, seminars or other ordinary activities.

Interviews with teaching staff

- Separate group interviews are usually held with the management team (e.g. head of department, programme coordinator, directors of studies, subject coordinator, senior faculty officers) and the group (or groups) of lecturers and instructors (teaching staff). Course administrators, study advisers and others are also usually interviewed.
- Some have advised ensuring that the amount of time allocated to the interviews with teaching staff is not too limited, and that more time should preferably be allocated to this than to the other groups.
- At one site visit the teaching staff were divided into thematic groups for the panel to meet: focus on written assignments, focus on educational leadership, etc.
- At one site visit, instead of group interviews, each assessor had individual 10-minute 'speed dating interviews' with five course directors in each session (equal number of course directors and assessors). The assessors and course directors all sat in one large room. The assessors had divided up the aspects between them. In all, three sessions were held with different course directors, with a joint coffee break between the sessions.

Interviews with students (and alumni)

During the site visit, the assessors interview students who give their point of view on the programme.

- Contact the students' union in good time to select students for the student interview during the site visit (the union sometimes enlists the assistance of a student association).
- Ask the assessors which categories of students they wish to interview (e.g. whether the students should be reaching the end of the programme or be a mixture of students at different stages of the programme, make sure international students are represented, etc.). The assessors often ask to meet a broadly composed group of students.
- Convey the assessors' requests regarding the categories of students they would like to interview to the students' union.
- The student group should be interviewed separately from the teaching staff group, so as to feel free to express their opinions. One piece of advice received is to avoid gathering students in too large a group, as this can inhibit discussion.
- Some assessment panels have chosen to interview students before interviewing the teaching staff.
- Assessors have appreciated having a chance to lunch with students during the site visit.
- Increasingly frequently, alumni have also been interviewed or assessors have had an opportunity to meet alumni at a coffee break or lunch during the site visit.

Concluding feedback meeting

A feedback meeting at which the assessment panel summarises its preliminary impressions has been experienced as a good conclusion to the site visit. This provides an opportunity for discussion and correction of any misunderstandings. The target group for feedback is generally a relatively small group of staff responsible for education from the department, the programme and the faculty. In addition, in some programme reviews a feedback meeting is held some time after the final assessment panel's report, sometimes involving the entire body of teaching staff and sometimes just programme coordinators. Some have commented in retrospect that a concluding meeting with the assessment panel or its chair at some later point would have been valuable. Some faculties' revised models include a concluding meeting (virtual or in-person) with one or more members of the assessment panel to give the reviewed unit a chance to ask follow-up questions.

2.6 Assessment panel's report

The assessment panel writes an assessment panel's report summarising the programme's strengths and weaknesses/areas for improvement and giving its recommendations. The faculties can also ask the panel to give an overall assessment of the quality of the programme, to clearly address any serious deficiencies they see, and to state which of their recommendations they consider to have highest priority.

Generally the panel is asked to send a draft assessment panel's report for programme coordinators to read through so that they can correct any factual errors and misunderstandings. Sometimes a virtual summarising meeting is held between programme coordinators and the assessment panel members in this connection. After this, the assessment panel submits its final report. The names, titles and affiliation of the members of the assessment panel should be stated in the report.

2.7 Evaluation report

When the assessment panel's report has been received, the programme coordinators set about writing their evaluation report, summarising the most important conclusions from the self-evaluation and the assessment panel's report and presenting prioritised planned measures.

In connection with this, it is common to hold a seminar or a day at which the teaching staff consider the feedback from the assessment panel and discuss potential measures. It is also important to reflect on how the programme can maintain the identified strengths of the programme. The student representatives in the working group can also be involved in this process. Student representatives are also included in the various bodies that process the evaluation report.

Experience shows that the planned measures should be stated specifying time of implementation and who is responsible.

2.8 Board decision

The evaluation report is processed within the faculty or disciplinary domain before being considered at a board meeting at which the board adopts its conclusion. The procedure at some faculties calls for programme coordinators to present conclusions and planned measures orally to the board in connection with the decision. An oral presentation of this kind is sometimes made before a subsidiary body of the board.

The board's conclusion includes taking a position on whether there is a need for *special follow-up* of one or more necessary measures.

It is a good idea to send the evaluation reports to the relevant students' union for their information. Programme coordinators can also consider sending the evaluation report to the members of the assessment panel as feedback on the response to their views.

2.9 Publication

A summary assessment panel report and planned measures must be published and made publicly available as directed in the guidelines. The planned measures are often published in the form of the evaluation report. Assessment panel's reports and planned measures are published on the University's website so as to be accessible both externally and internally to members of staff and students. The Division for Quality Enhancement coordinates publication.

2.10 Feedback to students

It is important to provide feedback on the results of the review and the planned measures to students taking the programme and the relevant students' union, for example by disseminating the evaluation report. This is one way of giving visibility to the quality assurance and enhancement activities conducted in the programme. Provide feedback to students who have participated in a working group, a reference group, in interviews during the site visit, etc., so that they see that their contributions and involvement play a role.

The guidelines state that students taking the programme concerned must be informed about the review and the measures that will be taken. Many programmes inform students about measures taken in response to the programme review at the start of the programme and at regular intervals as appropriate during the programme, and they also publish the planned measures in Studium. Remember to give feedback that reaches all students in the programme, not just student representatives on various bodies (a point criticised and recommendation made in the Swedish Higher Education Authority's HEI audit of Uppsala University's quality assurance activities, 2021).

2.11 Implementing measures

After the review, work begins on implementing the planned measures as set out in the evaluation report and the board's decision.

2.12 Follow-up of implemented measures

Implemented measures are followed up in the context of annual follow-up by the disciplinary domains/faculties. Measures that have been taken, along with any outstanding measures, must be documented.

In cases where a decision has been made on *special follow-up* of one or more necessary measures, this must be done each year by the relevant disciplinary domain/faculty board until the measures are completed or until the course or programme has been discontinued as a result of the deficiencies. Some faculties have introduced a procedure in which a deputy dean or educational board/equivalent has one or two consultations with the programme coordinator along the way, before the special follow-up takes place.

In its audit of Uppsala University's quality assurance activities (2020–2021), the Swedish Higher Education Authority recommended the University to ensure systematic follow-up of measures. They emphasised the importance of being able to check that identified areas for improvement are addressed by having clear documentation showing which planned measures have actually been implemented and which are still outstanding.

The disciplinary domains and faculties analyse the results and conclusions of the year's programme reviews and report to the Vice-Chancellor within the framework of ordinary operational planning and follow-up.

2.13 Annual systematic follow-up of education in general

Annual follow-up of continuous quality assurance and quality enhancement activities takes place as part of ordinary operational follow-up, usually in annual reports/quality reports and/or meetings. Some faculties focus on different aspects of development each year in their follow-up. The annual follow-up can also include follow-up of results from investigations at faculty or University level and any measures these have led to.

Continuous systematic quality assurance and quality enhancement activities form the basis for the programme reviews. They should therefore be documented in an appropriate way to facilitate follow-up and organisational memory.

Benchmarking could also be part of annual quality assurance and quality enhancement activities, focusing on one or other of the aspects in the guidelines, such as assessment, internships, a certain course, or some part of doctoral education.

2.14 New programme review every six years

A new programme review is carried out in the next review cycle (at least once every six years). The previous programme review can serve as a starting point for the new review, which thus becomes a follow-up of the previous review. The previous evaluation report can be attached to the self-evaluation, for example. According to the guidelines, the emphasis placed on the various aspects can differ depending on development needs and relevance.

3. Considerations when reviewing contract education and freestanding courses

Contract education and freestanding individual courses can be packaged with other education in larger review units, but can also be reviewed separately. Even when reviewed separately, the five areas and the aspects should be taken into account, but adapted as considered reasonable by those responsible with reference to the courses reviewed. According to the guidelines, the emphasis placed on the various aspects can differ depending on development needs and relevance. Not every individual course needs to fulfil all aspects.

It is relevant to describe the department's quality assurance procedures for these courses, e.g. how course syllabuses are adopted, and procedures for continuous quality assurance and quality enhancement such as reviewing teaching resources, course syllabuses, reading lists and course evaluations. This has a bearing on the aspects of research basis, teaching expertise, goal attainment, assessment, student influence (or 'participant influence' in the case of contract education) through course evaluations, for example, and study environment.

In some faculties' models, the range of courses offered and their target group must be justified in the self-evaluation. One of the faculties asks the assessment panels to assess the appropriateness of the range of courses offered.

Contract education has a natural link to working life and to individual and societal needs for knowledge. It should be relevant to illuminate how the views of clients and participants are gathered and balanced against research basis and academic standards. Freestanding courses also often have a strong connection with society's need for new knowledge, professionals' continuing professional development, and lifelong learning.

International, sustainability and equal opportunities and gender perspectives can be considered as reasonable in relation to the courses being reviewed. Giving reasons in the self-evaluation for the relevance found in the education opens the way for the assessment panel to express its views on this issue.

Another piece of advice is to draw inspiration from earlier audits of 'odd courses' made by the Swedish Higher Education Authority (the then Swedish National Agency for Higher Education) (HSV report 2014:15). This was a selection of courses (e.g. summer courses, contract education) for which higher education credits were awarded but which were not specifically required courses for any degree. The audits were intended to assess whether the courses were based on a research foundation and maintained a reasonable scholarly standard based on the requirements of Chapter 1, Sections 2 and 8–9 of the Higher Education Act (1992:1434). The coordinators had to describe in two or three pages how the course met the above requirements in the Higher Education Act and attach a syllabus, reading list and list of teaching resources. The purpose of the self-evaluation was to give a picture of how the course conformed to higher education standards and its quality.

One assessment panel commented in the report mentioned above (2014:15):

"In general, the audit indicates that there may be reason to ensure that these types of courses – which often seem to arise on the periphery of the educational mainstream to which most attention and interest is devoted – are developed and conducted by teaching staff with adequate scholarly [...] expertise, in an environment that is conducive to high-quality collegial endeavours, and with a research basis."

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education summarised the assessors' views from the audits in the following points (2014:15):

- the importance of ensuring that even short higher education courses develop the ability of students to make independent and critical assessments;
- that the courses live up to the requirements for a research basis that can reasonably be demanded of courses offered in higher education;
- the research foundation can be ensured through the expertise of teaching staff and examiners, the reading list and the research environment surrounding the course;
- each individual course should clearly correspond to at least one of the objectives of education at the level concerned specified in the Higher Education Act (it may be unreasonable to expect every course to fulfil all the objectives).

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education used the following criteria based on the requirements of the Higher Education Act:

- The content must be based on scholarship or artistic practice and on proven experience.
- The prior knowledge required must correspond to the requirements for education at the level concerned.
- The intended course learning outcomes must correspond to the requirements for education at the level concerned.
- Modes of instruction, teaching materials, facilities (e.g. premises and equipment) and examination formats must be commensurate with the intended course learning outcomes.
- Sufficient teaching resources must be provided, in terms of scope, necessary research expertise and professional experience.
- The course as a whole must be organised so as to give the students good conditions to attain the intended course learning outcomes.

4. Considerations when reviewing doctoral (third cycle) programmes

There is a reciprocal link between the research environment and the environment for doctoral education. However, even if doctoral students operate in a research environment, which has a decisive influence on their education, they also belong to a doctoral education environment. Feedback from assessors has called for a clearer focus on the educational perspective and the environment for doctoral students when writing the self-evaluation, so that the text does not tip over towards research and research excellence.

A good doctoral education environment provides the necessary conditions for fulfilling all of the outcomes specified for doctoral education in the System of Qualifications (see Annex 2 of the Higher Education Ordinance, SFS 1993:100).

When writing the self-evaluation, it it is advisable to aim to base what you write on conditions applying to *all* doctoral students, regardless of their group or specialisation. If there are specialisations, you can start by stating the conditions applying to all specialisations and then go on to describe the specific situation for each specialisation. In your account, follow the same order for each specialisation to make it easier for the assessors.

It needs to be clear to the assessors whether they are expected to evaluate the department’s doctoral education as a whole or the subject areas/specialisations that it encompasses.

In their feedback, assessors have suggested that it would be a good idea to start by giving all the members of the assessment panel an introduction to the review model and to doctoral education in the faculty.

The advice in previous sections is also relevant to reviews of doctoral programmes, but some special considerations listed here apply specifically to reviews of this educational level.

4.1 Some examples of questions for the self-evaluation

Some examples of possible review questions for a self-reflective analysis of strengths and weaknesses/ areas for improvement in the self-evaluation:

- How are doctoral students integrated in the broader research environment? What is the research education environment like for doctoral students?
- What quality assurance procedures are in place for reviewing the thesis ahead of the defence?
- What is done to ensure breadth in the doctoral programme?
- What is the seminar culture like and how does it work? To what extent do both doctoral students and senior researchers attend and participate?
- What elements of peer review exist apart from supervision sessions (such as seminars, workshops, conferences, etc.)?
- What is done to fulfil the intended degree outcomes that are not covered by the thesis? How is progression managed? For example: What opportunities do doctoral students have to discuss research in both national and international scholarly contexts? What about opportunities for discussion with society in general? Or opportunities to contribute to social development and to support the learning of others? How does the programme ensure that the doctoral students demonstrate intellectual autonomy, disciplinary rectitude and the ability to make assessments of research ethics? How do the doctoral students attain specialised insight into the possibilities and limitations of research?

- How is the individual study plan (ISP) used? What does the ISP cover? Does it cover progression in relation to the intended degree outcomes? How is the ISP followed up and who takes part in this?
- What doctoral courses exist? What are the examination requirements? Are any courses compulsory?
- Do doctoral students have the opportunity to express their opinion of courses through course evaluations and what feedback do the doctoral students receive on the results of evaluations and any measures taken in response?
- What contribution do any graduate schools make to doctoral students' educational environment? How is the quality of such parts of the programme ensured and evaluated?
- What are the procedures for supervision? How does supervision work?
- Is there a supervisors' committee? What are the arrangements and participation like? How does collaboration work in the supervisors' committee?
- What are the arrangements for doctoral student influence? What are the arrangements for dialogue between the doctoral student council and the programme coordinators for doctoral education?
- What support is available to doctoral students and supervisors when things are not working?
- What sort of introduction do new doctoral students receive?
- How do doctoral students find information about the doctoral programme?
- How are doctoral students prepared for teaching?
- What consideration is given to a gender perspective? What attention is given to equal opportunities at the department, what measures have been taken and are there any challenges? Do all doctoral students, whatever their legal gender, have the same opportunities for informal conversations about research with senior researchers (in addition to supervision and seminars)? What are the conditions for different doctoral students (for example, regarding salary, prolongation, per diem allowances)? Do doctoral students who do not speak Swedish have the same conditions as Swedish-speaking doctoral students (and vice versa)?
- How are doctoral students prepared for their career after graduating (both within and outside academia)? Are there any arrangements for career planning? What use is made of the experience of alumni?
- What is the doctoral completion rate like? What analysis has been made of doctoral completion and doctoral drop-outs?
- What is the process for admitting doctoral students like?

See also appendix 2 for possible review questions based on the eleven aspects. The background material for the self-evaluation can also include the results of the research education surveys with questions for doctoral students and supervisors conducted at the University, where there are reports for specific faculties and departments (see *Background material* below).

4.2 Doctoral student participation

Involve the doctoral students in the review and self-evaluation process at an early stage. Remember to include international doctoral students. Some examples of ways in which doctoral students can participate include being a member of a working group, feedback from the doctoral student council on the text of the self-evaluation, or a survey or interviews of doctoral students carried out by the doctoral student council. In some cases, the doctoral students have written a doctoral student statement that has been attached to the self-evaluation. Doctoral students are interviewed during the site visit (see below).

4.3 Background material

Background material frequently used in doctoral programme reviews has included general syllabuses, various governance documents and procedures, individual study plan templates, selected individual study plans, course syllabuses, course evaluations over a certain period of time, doctoral student handbook, key indicators (e.g. doctoral completion, net period of study, gender breakdown), follow-ups of alumni and official statistics (e.g. employment rates). Other documentation provided has included higher seminar programmes, compilation of interviews with all professors responsible for doctoral programmes, doctoral student surveys, analysis of admissions bias based on gender, list of doctoral students, supervisors, admissions and thesis defences over a certain period of time. Comments have been received to the effect that extensive lists of publications have been of dubious value.

Results from research evaluations conducted (Q&R) (and possibly research environment surveys in connection with Q&R17) and the doctoral education surveys (questionnaires addressed to doctoral students and supervisors) conducted at Uppsala University can be used as background material for discussion and analysis in the review. There are results at faculty and department level. The doctoral education surveys include questions on supervision, the environment for doctoral education, individual study plans, seminars, courses, course evaluations, intended degree outcomes, teaching, careers and guidance. The University-wide report includes factors that contribute to doctoral student satisfaction with their doctoral programme (*Fokus forskarutbildning. Fördjupad analys av en enkätundersökning riktad till doktorander och handledare vid Uppsala universitet [Focus on doctoral education. In-depth analysis of a questionnaire survey addressed to doctoral students and supervisors at Uppsala University]*, 2023).

4.4 Site visit

Physical site visits are generally preferred by both programme coordinators and assessors, as this gives assessors a better opportunity to experience the doctoral education environment on campus and to engage in collegial conversations. Two-day site visits have worked well and time has then also been available for the assessment panel's own work. There is some experience of combining a physical site visit with virtual participation by one or more assessors, which in some cases can make it possible to broaden the membership of the assessment panel.

Broad doctoral student representation has been desired at the interviews during the site visit (e.g. in terms of subject, Swedish/non-Swedish-speaking, legal gender). The relevant students' union selects doctoral students for the interviews during the site visit, but do convey requests to the union concerning composition of the student group. Some assessment panels have forwarded interview questions to doctoral students in advance.

A coffee break or lunch with doctoral students has been appreciated. Sometimes assessors have also been given the chance to meet alumni. Assessors have also appreciated a tour of the department during the site visit to meet supervisors and doctoral students in their normal setting.

Assessors have appreciated a concluding feedback meeting with representatives from the department and faculty at the end of the site visit.

Appendix 1. Advice to assessment panel

Initial planning

Convener

There needs to be a convener or chair to coordinate the work of the assessment panel. For example, someone needs to convene internal working meetings, liaise with the reviewed unit and faculty, and take special responsibility for introducing the student representative to the work of the assessment panel. The convener ensures that responsibilities are divided up among the members of the working group.

Timetable and organisation of the work

The assessment panel needs to book its own internal meetings, look over the timetable and deadlines and discuss the organisation of the work. These internal meetings are usually virtual.

An efficient way of proceeding may be for each member of the panel, when reading through the self-evaluation and background material, to make a note of points that are unclear and questions in preparation for the site visit, or to draft a reflection under each aspect or area. Some assessment panels divide up the principal responsibility for the aspects between themselves.

The assessment panel needs to discuss who has responsibility for making notes during the panel's discussions (though everyone can also make their own notes), and how to organise the writing of the assessment panel's report. Some assessment panels have had an early draft of their report ready even before the site visit.

Student participation

Be sure to include the student in the work of the assessment panel from the very outset. Take extra care to introduce the student to the process. Remember to explain terms and concepts used. This paves the way for the student to contribute to the evaluation by providing a student perspective. Be clear about the preparations expected before each meeting and any deadlines.

The convener can check with the student representative after meetings whether there are any questions and whether any changes could be made for the next meeting.

Meetings

It is quite common to have some type of start-up meeting with representatives from the faculty and the programme coordinator at the reviewed unit in order to put the review and the programme in context for the assessment panel/chair.

Assessment panels often have internal pre-meetings online before the site visit, usually at least two. Previous assessors underline the value of calibration within the assessment panel before the site visit.

One meeting may be needed, for example, to plan the work of reading the self-evaluation and background material. One meeting may be needed for planning the site visit and the interviews that will be conducted. Some assessment panels have scheduled this pre-meeting at least one month before the site visit. Before this all members of the panel have studied the self-evaluation and background material. Questions need to be formulated and prioritised before the site visit and it needs to be decided how notes will be taken during the interviews. In some assessment panels the principal responsibility for taking notes during interviews and for asking questions has been rotated within the panel. Requests from the assessment panel before the site visit regarding categories to interview etc. need to be conveyed to the person responsible for scheduling the site visit.

In connection with finalising the assessment panel's report it is common for the panel to hold one or two virtual meetings, combined with email correspondence.

Planning for the site visit

- How does the assessment panel want to organise the site visit? Which categories of employees and students does the assessment panel want to interview?
- Assessors have indicated that it is good to plan time for the panel to meet on its own at the start of the site visit to go through details (the time the panel has spent on its own has varied from half an hour up to a couple of hours).
- In general, separate group interviews are held with the categories of management, teaching staff and students. Other categories of staff, such as administrative staff, can also be interviewed.
- Some have advised ensuring that the amount of time allocated to interviews with teaching staff is not too limited, and that more time should preferably be allocated to this than to the other groups.
- Some assessment panels have had generous amounts of time on their own after each interview to summarise their impressions and make a note of any further questions, while others have had a more extended time on their own scheduled for the second day to summarise their impressions and begin writing. At least half an hour between interviews has been recommended to give the panel time to digest their impressions from each interview. Some assessment panels have stated that after each interview they have made a brief summary of what they have learned from the conversation.
- Assessors have appreciated lunch and/or coffee with students and teaching staff respectively. Meetings with alumni have also been appreciated.
- Make requests regarding the background of students to participate in the interviews (e.g. students at different stages of the programme or at the end of the programme, international students being represented if the programme has international students).
- Consider conveying the questions to students in advance before the interviews to make it easier for them to canvass opinions from other students if they wish to do so. This does not prevent other questions being asked during the site visit.
- Assessors have indicated that it makes work on the panel's report(s) easier and more efficient if time is allocated during the site visit for drafting the assessment panel's report.
- It can be useful to decide who will take the lead in each interview and who will have principal responsibility for taking notes during each interview. One piece of advice from assessors is for everyone to make notes but for one person to have principal responsibility for notes during each interview session.
- At one site visit, instead of group interviews with members of teaching staff, each assessor had individual 10-minute 'speed dating interviews' with five course directors in each session (equal number of course directors and assessors). The assessors and course directors all sat in one large room. The assessors had divided up the aspects between them. In all, three sessions were held with different course directors, with a joint coffee break between the sessions.
- At one site visit the teaching staff were divided into thematic groups for the panel to meet: focus on written assignments, focus on educational leadership, etc.

Assessment panel’s report

A draft assessment panel’s report should be sent to the reviewed unit for correction of factual errors. After that, the final assessment panel’s report (or reports) should be completed.

Appendix 2. Idea bank – review questions based on the aspects

Each programme review should cover eleven aspects. The eleven aspects are general in nature and can be operationalised in different ways in different programmes. According to the guidelines for the University's programme review model, different emphasis can be placed on the aspects depending on development needs and relevance. Discplinary domain boards and faculty boards provide additional guidance.

Following the revision of the guidelines (2022), the aspects have been grouped into five areas to allow for more coherent accounts and thus reduce overlap. The five areas are:

- Goal attainment, teaching and assessment
- Teaching expertise
- Student participation and student perspective
- Working life and social relevance
- Inclusion, international outlook and sustainability

This document sets out *suggestions* for review questions based on the five areas and the eleven aspects to inspire your own question formulations. It can be seen as a "buffet" of questions to support the self-evaluation process. The questions have been developed from the first version of the document *Advice and tips when planning and implementing reviews of study programmes* (in Swedish 2017). Frequently occurring feedback from assessors is addressed in the review questions. Inspiration can also be drawn from the Teaching and Learning Programme at Uppsala University.

Each programme can formulate questions that are of particular importance for assessing and developing the quality of the specific programme. Keep in mind that students[5] can provide ideas for relevant areas of enquiry.

What is important to know about the programme in question to ensure it is maintaining good quality in all aspects – and to inspire further development?

One piece of advice is to start by freely formulating review questions based solely on your own knowledge of the programme and its learning outcomes. This can be done through teacher collaboration, during formal planning days or within other collegial forums together with students/doctoral students. In the next step, you can cross-reference your own questions with the aspects to ensure they are all covered. Otherwise, there is a risk of being so driven by the aspects and suggestions below that your own questions risk being lost.

Each review must include an overall assessment of the quality of the programme – its strengths, weaknesses and areas for development. Formulated as questions, it could read as follows:

- What is the overall quality of the programme? How does the programme compare nationally and internationally?
- What are its strengths and weaknesses? What are the main challenges and development needs for the future? How can the programme be further improved?

[5] In this text, the term 'student' refers to any person admitted to and undertaking Bachelor's, Master's or PhD studies.

Continuous quality assurance and enhancement

The guidelines state that there should be a description of the continuous quality assurance and enhancement in each area. Example questions:

- How are quality assurance and enhancement carried out in the programme? What formal and informal procedures exist in the educational environment and how can these be further developed?
- Based on the previous programme review, what measures have been implemented and how do you assess the impact of these measures?
- How do teachers interact during the planning, implementation and development of the programme? Are there formal forums for teaching discussions and exchanging experiences?
- How is the programme monitored? How is it ensured that the necessary measures are taken when shortcomings are identified? How are course reports used in continuous quality assurance and enhancement at the faculty and in giving feedback to students?
- What are the procedures for revising syllabi? Are syllabi systematically followed up? How is the range of courses analysed?
- How are various key figures followed up in the programme (e.g. completion rates, drop-outs, any gender differences, no. of applications) and how does this underpin development work?
- How is the Teaching and Learning Programme used in work with quality assurance and enhancement? How are its learning outcomes and division of responsibilities integrated into continuous quality assurance and enhancement work?

Goal attainment, teaching and assessment

Goal attainment

That the programme achieves the objectives of the Higher Education Act and Higher Education Ordinance (System of Qualifications) and programme-specific objectives, i.e., that actual learning outcomes correspond to intended learning outcomes.

For general degrees and degrees leading to professional qualifications, the outcomes of the System of Qualifications in the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100), annex 2, which each programme must ultimately meet. For individual freestanding courses (including contract education), it is ultimately the outcomes in the Higher Education Act (1992:1434) Chapter 1, Section 8 and Section 9, that are applicable[6]. The programme-specific outcomes are set out in programme syllabi, course syllabi and general study plans. Uppsala University Mission, Goals and Strategies and the Teaching and Learning Programme also specify general learning outcomes for the programmes. Examples of review questions:

- How do you work to ensure that students achieve the learning outcomes of the programme?
- Do the actual results of the students correspond to the expected learning outcomes? Do students with passing grades achieve the outcomes? How do you know?
- What are the links between degree outcomes, course outcomes, teaching activities and assessments? How do you ensure a strong constructive alignment between outcomes, teaching and assessment?
- How do you know that the degree outcomes are being met? How do teachers collaborate to ensure progression in the programme? Do you use degree outcome matrices, and in what manner?
- Do the syllabi and course literature create the necessary conditions for students to achieve the degree outcomes?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of your current approach?
- Have you taken/planned to take measures to strengthen your ability to assess whether students' knowledge and skills correspond to the learning outcomes?

The importance of assessment

Assessment has a unique status as a particularly results-orientated process. If the assessment is designed in a way that makes it likely that each student with a passing grade has successfully achieved the learning outcomes, this helps to ensure that the objectives are met. See further under *Progression and assessment*.

Analysis of completion rates

An analysis of completion rates, i.e. the proportion of students who achieve the outcomes, as well as an analysis of what the programme is doing to better equip students to achieve the outcomes, can contribute to the overall picture of the programme's quality. Completion rate data is not a quality measure in itself, but it can be valuable as one of several bases for analysis and reflection.

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[6] See also section *3. Considerations when reviewing contract education and freestanding courses*, in the document *Stöd och råd vid utbildningsutvärderingar* (Support and advice on programme reviews) (2024), see Staff Gateway, Teaching – Quality and Evaluation.

- Are the completion rates high because students have achieved their learning outcomes, or because the bar has been lowered?
- Are completion rates low because students have insufficient prior knowledge, because teaching is poorly designed or because requirement levels are maintained?
- Do completion rates differ according to gender or other characteristics across the student group? If so, what could be the reason?
- What measures can be taken to better equip students to achieve the programme's learning outcomes?

Alumni studies and employer studies

Alumni studies (the views and experiences of former students) and employer studies (the views of employers) can also provide a basis for assessing the attainment of the programme's goals. Alumni studies can provide information on how former students (alumni) view their programme a few years after graduation in light of their work experience. They can also provide a picture of the working life of alumni after graduation.

Research basis

That the content and teaching methods are founded on a research basis and proven experience.

- How does the teachers collegium work to develop the quality of the research basis in the programme?
- How do you know that your programme's research basis is maintaining good quality?
- How do you ensure that the content of the programme is based on current research? How are new research results integrated into the programme?
- How do students develop a scientific approach during the programme?
- How is the programme organised to provide a progression in methodological knowledge (quantitative and qualitative, if relevant to the programme)?
- How do students participate in activities with a research basis? Are students involved in ongoing research? Does the research basis provide progression?
- What procedures do you have for updating reading lists based on current research?
- How do you collaborate with the library to further develop students' skills in searching for and evaluating information?
- How do you work to integrate ethical aspects and research ethics into the programme?
- Is the research basis of the programme discussed with students, as well as how knowledge is developed? Are the benefits of the research basis discussed in relation to the programme's links to the world of work?
- How do you ensure that teaching methods are founded on a scientific basis and proven experience?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of your current approach?
- Have you taken/planned to take measures to develop the research basis in the programme?[7]

The Guidelines for approving, monitoring and phasing out degree programmes (UFV 2019/2302) state that the decision-making data must include a description of the participation of teachers who are active researchers in the programme, as well as a description of how the programme conveys the

[7] For some of the questions in the idea bank, inspiration is taken from the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences' report "*Research basis – a key factor for quality in higher education*" (2023), www.kva.se/forskningsanknytning.

scientific basis of the subject, how the students participate in research-based activities and how they develop a scientific approach.

Student learning

That the teaching focuses on student-centred learning

- How do you work to ensure that research findings in teaching and subject didactics underpin the design of the programme? How does the choice of teaching methods support student learning?
- How do you know that teaching focuses on student-centred learning?
- How do you attempt to vary teaching methods and assessment?
- How does the teaching encourage active participation from students?
- How do you provide feedback on students' performance? How do you work to develop feedback?
- How do you involve students in assessing their own and their peers' performance through feedback?
- How do you work to provide students with intellectual challenges?
- How do you work to create positive collaboration between teachers and students?
- How do you create conditions for students to take responsibility for and reflect on their own learning and their learning process? How do you communicate students' responsibilities and their own efforts in terms of time and activity for learning?
- How do you collaborate with the library to support student learning?
- How are the learning environment, technology and infrastructure designed to support student learning?
- How do you work to ensure that all students with different conditions, motivations and learning styles are given equal opportunities to learn?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of your current approach?
- Have you taken/planned to take measures to strengthen your ability to contribute to student learning?

The Teaching and Learning Programme at Uppsala University is based on teachers' and students' experiences of how good quality is produced in the programme, as well as on what research has shown creates good conditions for learning.[8] By describing in the self-evaluation the steps the programme takes to promote student learning in the subject and by promoting the active role of students in learning (e.g. through student-activating teaching, students assisting each other in learning, students as co-creators of the programme and participating in programme reviews), the efforts are made accessible for analysis, external review and feedback.

[8] Research on how conditions for learning are created can also be consulted to inform review questions. An example of such a knowledge review is *Ledning för kvalitet i undervisning och lärande på grundnivå och avancerad nivå* (Guide to ensuring quality in teaching and learning at undergraduate and Master's level) (Bolander Laksov, Kettis, Alexandersson, Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions' Expert Group on Quality Issues, 2014).

Progression and assessment

That the achievement of intended learning outcomes is assessed using appropriate and fair methods, and that progression is ensured

- How does your teachers collegium work to ensure a good match between the learning outcomes of the programme, the design of the programme and the way in which knowledge, skills and abilities are assessed?
- How does your teachers collegium work on educational progression, both in a degree programme and between different levels of education?
- How do you know that the learning outcomes are being assessed in an appropriate and fair way?
- How does your teachers collegium work to ensure that assessments maintain high quality?
- How does your teachers collegium manage assessments? Are there grading criteria?
- What steps do you take to combat cheating and plagiarism?
- How do you know that there is good progression in the programme?
- Do you use a degree outcome matrix? Does it also show forms of teaching and examination?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of your current approach?
- Have you taken/planned to take measures to strengthen progression and assessment?

Teaching expertise

That staff involved in teaching and supervision possess adequate expertise in the subject matter, and in teaching and learning in higher education and/or subject didactics, and that there is sufficient teaching capacity

- How is professional development in relation to teaching and subject didactics managed?
- How do you work to ensure that teaching staff have up-to-date expertise in their subject?
- What work do you undertake to develop teaching skills? How do you stimulate professional development in relation to teaching/subject didactics? Are the requirements for teachers to undergo basic teacher training respected? How are equivalence assessments carried out?
- What steps are taken to ensure that supervisors have supervisor training?
- Is teacher capacity sufficient? Why/why not? Which categories of teachers are involved in teaching? How is the long-term availability of skilled staff ensured?
- How do you introduce new teachers (including doctoral students who teach) to the teaching/supervisor role?
- How do you ensure that teaching staff have good conditions for their work regardless of their background?
- How do you work to ensure a clear and effective educational leadership?
- Does the programme have distinguished university teachers? How is their expertise utilised? How are other teachers encouraged to qualify for that distinction?
- How do you work to ensure that teaching merits are expertly evaluated in appointments and promotions?
- Does professional development at the faculty take place in order to broaden and deepen the research basis of the programme?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of your current approach?
- What steps do you take to preserve the strengths of the current teaching staff?
- Have you taken/planned to take measures to strengthen the teaching staff?

Student participation and student perspective

Student participation

That students have influence on the planning, implementation and follow-up of the programme

- What work do you undertake on student participation in the programme?
- How do students participate in the further development of the programme (planning, implementation and development)?
- How do you know that students have influence on the planning, implementation and follow-up of the programme?
- How are students encouraged to participate in quality assurance and enhancement? How are new student representatives introduced to this task?
- How do you know that students are aware of opportunities for student influence?
- How do you process the results of course evaluations and other student surveys? How do you relay the results of course evaluations and potential measures to the students? How do you use course reports[9] in continuous quality assurance and enhancement work and for giving feedback to students?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of your current approach?
- Have you taken/planned to take measures to strengthen student participation in the programme?

Accessible and appropriate study environment

That an accessible and appropriate study environment is provided for all students

- How do you work to provide an accessible physical and psychosocial study and learning environment for *all* students?
- How do you know that the students' study environment is accessible and appropriate?
- What student support is available in the programme? Do students know where to find this support?
- Do you have some kind of system for follow-up of study results ("early warning") through which you actively contact the students concerned?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of your current approach?
- Have you taken/planned to take measures to strengthen the study and learning environment?

[9] According to the *Guidelines for Course Evaluations* (UFV 2020/2340), a course report is to be written by the course coordinator, or another person appointed for this purpose, with an evaluation of how the course is conducted based on the views of students and teachers and proposals for possible measures.

Working life and social relevance

That the programme meets individuals' and society's needs for learning and professional knowledge and prepares students for future careers

- How do you link the programme with the world of work and different forms of interaction with wider society?
- How do you prepare students for their future working life?
- How do you learn about the needs of society and employers? Is this undertaken systematically?
- How do you know that the programme is relevant to the needs of society and prepares students for their future working life?
- How do you track the views of alumni (former students) of the programme? In what various ways do you learn from alumni in your programme?
- How do you develop students' ability to obtain generic skills (e.g. analytical skills, communication skills, collaboration)?
- How do you manage interprofessional learning, if relevant?
- How do you communicate the social relevance and the relevance of the research basis to working life to students?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of your current approach?
- Have you taken/planned to take measures to strengthen the relevance of the programme to society's needs and in terms of preparing students for their future working life?

Inclusion, international outlook and sustainability

Equal opportunities and gender perspective

That equal opportunities and a gender perspective are integrated in the programme

- How do you incorporate a gender equality and equal opportunities perspective into the programme?
- How do you integrate a gender equality perspective into the programme and how do you follow up on the that perspective? How is a gender perspective addressed in the programme?
- In addition to a gender balance, what does a gender equality perspective entail in terms of the content and design of the programme?
- How do you ensure that students are given equally good conditions for learning regardless of their background?[10]
- Have you created clear processes for systematic preventive equal opportunities management for the students?
- In what way are students involved in equal opportunities management?
- How have you checked that the programme is gender equal and characterised by equal opportunities?
  (For example, have you investigated the risks of discrimination and obstacles to equal rights and opportunities for all in the selection process, teaching methods and programme organisation, assessment, study environment, options to reconcile studies with parenthood?)
- How do you work to create an inclusive atmosphere and study environment for all students regardless of background? Are concepts, traditions and other aspects that are 'taken as red' explained? Is professional development in inclusive teaching offered?
- Are study guides or similar available to give every student clarity on requirements and expectations?
- How do you ensure that international staff and students are provided with equal opportunities?
- Are there procedures for taking a gender equality perspective into account when choosing a required reading list? Is the choice of reading list discussed with students? Are examples and cases used in teaching examined from a gender equality and equal opportunities perspective?
- Are completion and dropout rates for women and men monitored and how does this underpin development work?
- Is a gender equality and equal opportunities perspective taken into account when revising syllabi?
- How do you incorporate widening participation into the programme? Do you analyse the composition of the student population and does this inform recruitment efforts for specific target groups?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of your current approach?
- Have you taken/planned to take measures to strengthen equal opportunities and the gender equality perspective in the programme?

[10] At Uppsala University, the concept of ‘equal opportunities’ is understood with reference to the seven grounds of discrimination addressed by the Discrimination Act, (SFS 2008:567), e.g., legal sex, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, functional diversity, sexual orientation and age, plus social background.

Chapter 1, Section 5 of the Higher Education Act states: “Equality between women and men shall always be taken into account and promoted in the operations of higher education institutions. Higher education institutions shall also actively promote and widen recruitment to higher education.”

Internationalisation

That internationalisation and international perspectives are promoted

- What steps do you take to further develop international and global perspectives in the programme?
- Which international and global perspectives are included in the programme?
- How do you manage ‘internationalisation at home’? How do you capitalise on having an international student group in your teaching?
- How do you capitalise on any international experience that students and teachers have to offer?
- How do you work on mobility? How do you encourage students to study abroad?
- What role does the required reading play in this context?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of your current approach?
- Have you taken/planned to take measures to strengthen internationalisation in the programme?

Chapter 1, Section 5 of the Higher Education Act states: “The collected international activities of each higher education institution must enhance the quality of its research and education, and make a national and global contribution to the sustainable development described in paragraph one above.” (See below)

Sustainability perspective

That a sustainability perspective is promoted

- How do you develop a sustainability perspective in the programme?
- In what ways is a sustainability perspective reflected in the programme?
- Does the teaching connect to relevant parts of the UN Sustainable Development Goals in a way that is evident to the students?
- What role does the required reading play in this context?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of your current approach?
- Have you taken/planned to take measures to strengthen the sustainability perspective in the programme?

Chapter 1, Section 5 of the Higher Education Act states: “In the course of their operations, higher education institutions shall promote sustainable development to assure for present and future generations a sound and healthy environment, economic and social welfare, and justice.” The UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (2030 Agenda) cover the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.