

# **Six-Year Follow-Up of Subjects and Related Study Programmes in First- and Second-Cycle Education<sup>1</sup>**

These guidelines were finalised by the Faculty Board on the 21<sup>st</sup> of October 2020 and take effect from the same day.

Registration number HS 2021/312

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<sup>1</sup> This is a translation of the Swedish version (Sexårsuppföljning av ämne och relaterade utbildningsprogram inom utbildning på grundnivå och avancerad nivå, registration number 2020/879). In the event of any discrepancy, the Swedish version of this document shall prevail.

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# 1 Introduction

All education at the University of Skövde (the University) is to be followed up within the framework of six-year cycles (six-year follow-up). The purpose of the follow-up is to assure and improve the quality of the education. The follow-up is part of quality assurance procedures for education. The document “Guidelines for Quality Assurance Procedures in Education” [Riktlinjer för kvalitetsarbete inom utbildning] outlines a number of activities for follow-up of education. The six-year follow-up of subjects and study programmes outlined in this document constitutes one of these activities.

The six-year follow-up includes subjects (main fields of study and resource subjects) with any associated study programmes. The follow-up also includes access programmes and contract education. The University’s third-cycle education is followed up according to a separate model found in “Guidelines for Six-Year Follow-Up of Third-Cycle Subjects”.

The six-year follow-up of education takes place by area; all health sciences programmes are followed up at the same time, for instance. Coordination of the follow-up is performed by a specially appointed project manager. A special timetable shows when during the period in question the different areas are to be followed up.

The University’s quality assurance procedures are to be characterised by distinctness and transparency. The findings of the six-year follow-up are therefore communicated both internally and externally.

# 2 Process

The six-year follow-up of subjects and related study programmes takes place according to the following steps:

- Start-up and selection
- External review
- Self-evaluation
- Faculty Board’s analysis and report
- Feedback of planned and implemented measures

Three to six months before the initial meeting, the Faculty Board invites the relevant school to an information meeting. The purpose of the meeting is broad dissemination of knowledge concerning the follow-up at the school. At the meeting, an overview plan of what is being followed up, how follow-up will take place, and a preliminary timetable are presented, so that the school can plan for resources (such as staffing), and prepare for the follow-up.

The follow-up officially begins with an initial meeting.

The timeframe of the follow-up normally comprises nine months, counted from the initial meeting. A schematic timetable is presented in appendix 3. A special timetable is set for each follow-up process.

The findings of the follow-up constitute the foundation for ongoing development of the education<sup>2</sup>.

Goals and measures related thereto should therefore be documented in operational plans, and in other documentation connected to the school's and education's quality assurance procedures.

## **2.1 Start-up and selection**

### **2.1.1 Start-up**

The formal beginning of the follow-up is when the Faculty Board calls a start-up meeting with the school's representatives (relevant head of school and head of division, as well as concerned teachers – mainly subject coordinators and programme coordinators), and student representatives. Relevant office holders from Support Services may also be invited.

In connection with the meeting, templates, materials from previous follow-ups, and other relevant material are made available on a joint, digital storage surface. The goal of the meeting is to gather everyone concerned, and to ensure that everyone has a good understanding of the follow-up process and related work.

### **2.1.2 Selection**

The review is performed based on the assessment areas and criteria stated in appendixes 1 and 2. To obtain material for certain assessment areas, various selections need to be made, namely

- selection of degree projects and learning outcomes for review of goal attainment in study programmes
- selection of learning outcomes and local programme objectives for review of progression in study programmes
- selection of courses for review of course quality in subjects

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<sup>2</sup> The term 'education' includes both study programmes and subjects.

### **Selection of degree projects and learning outcomes for review of goal attainment in study programmes**

A random selection of degree projects within the main field of study is made. Normally, between five and 15 degree projects within the main field of study are reviewed. The selection is controlled to certain extent, when relevant, to ensure that different specializations and study programmes are represented in the sample.

Normally, five national learning outcomes are reviewed. If a programme leads to a double degree; a professional qualification and a general qualification, outcomes from both qualifications are to be included in the review. The Faculty Board decides, following consultation with the concerned subject coordinators, which outcomes are to be reviewed.

### **Selection of learning outcomes and local programme objectives for review of progression in study programmes**

One or more national learning outcomes and/or local programme objectives is/are selected for progression review. The Faculty Board decides, following consultation with the concerned subject coordinators, which outcomes/objectives are to be reviewed.

### **Selection of courses for review of course quality in subjects**

Course quality, which includes the assurance of intended course objectives, is followed up through a review of selected courses within the subject. Normally, two courses per subject are reviewed. The school selects one course to be reviewed, and the Faculty Board selects the other. The reviewed courses can be programme courses, freestanding courses, qualifying courses, or contract courses (credit-bearing or non-credit-bearing)<sup>3</sup>.

## **2.2 External review**

An external review is used for the goal attainment assessment area. The assessment area, which concerns study programmes, is described in appendix 1.

### **2.2.1 Appointment of reviewers**

The external reviewers are appointed by the Faculty Board. The reviewers' fees are regulated in a special decision.

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<sup>3</sup> The assurance of intended course learning outcomes and other course quality in qualifying courses and contract courses means that the education is reviewed in relation to the relevant rules and regulations.

The reviewers must be well acquainted with education within the programme's/programmes' knowledge area, and in terms of competence, they must have at least a Degree of Doctor (or the equivalent competence). Aspects of bias and gender equality shall be taken into consideration when the appointment is made.

Reviewers are proposed by representatives of the study programmes concerned by the follow-up. Proposals are made early on in the process. The goal is to be able to appoint external reviewers in connection with the initial meeting or soon thereafter.

### **2.2.2 Work and tasks of reviewers**

The reviewers are given access to the selected degree projects. They are also given the subject definition for the relevant main field of study, the programme syllabus for the relevant programme(s), as well as the course syllabus(es) of the degree project(s), the associated grading criteria, and a description of the summative assessment(s). Normally, five projects are reviewed by each reviewer. The projects may be connected to one or more study programmes.

Goal attainment is assessed both per degree project and learning outcomes, and aggregately for all reviewed degree projects.

Once the degree projects have been evaluated, each reviewer shall provide a statement, as per the template made available and the agreed upon timetable.

## **2.3 Self-evaluation**

Subject coordinators and programme coordinators are responsible for the compilation of self-evaluations with appendixes. Collaboration with other concerned office holders, mainly other teachers in the subject group and teachers at relevant study programmes, shall take place. In addition, consultation with concerned students shall take place. The self-evaluation is to reflect the school's collective image of the subject or study programme. Therefore, it's important that the head of division and the head of school contribute to the content.

Normally, one self-evaluation per subject (main fields of study as well as resource subjects), and one self-evaluation per related study programme is written. In cases where there is a large amount of overlap with closely related programmes, the Faculty Board and the school may agree that these study programmes be handled in a joint self-evaluation. This is to be agreed no later than at the initial meeting.

In the self-evaluation, education in the subject or relevant study programmes respectively are outlined, analysed, and evaluated, in relation to the assessment areas and criteria used (see appendixes 1 and 2). The emphasis of the self-evaluation should be more on evaluation than on description, and it is very important to highlight how the assessment criteria are met, using concrete examples. The purpose of this is to provide an understanding of the subject or study programme as a whole, and for how the internal processes work to drive quality.

The self-evaluation also includes a summarising reflection and analysis of the subject or study programme.

The self-evaluation is compiled as a written report using a special template that is provided by the Faculty Board. The template includes instructions on what should be brought up in relation to each assessment criterion. The relevant template is available to all staff. The report should be no longer than 30 pages (excluding appendixes). The self-evaluation is handed to the Faculty Board by the relevant head of school.

## **2.4 Faculty Board's analysis**

Once all the material is available, it is analysed by the Faculty Board. The Faculty Board analyses and reviews all the assessment areas and associated criteria for subjects and study programmes – except goal attainment, which is reviewed by external reviewers (see section 2.2). The assessment areas and criteria used can be found in appendixes 1 and 2. Many of the assessment areas and criteria are also used for the review that precedes the establishment of study programmes and subjects.

In addition to the self-evaluations for subjects and study programmes, and the statements of the external reviewers, the Faculty Board also analyses other relevant materials. Such materials may be course reports and programme reports from course and programme evaluations, as well as various statistical data.

### **2.4.1 Interviews with representatives of the subject or study programme and student representatives**

In their analysis work, the Faculty Board performs interviews with representatives of the subject and study programme, and students. At the interviews, there is an opportunity to clarify and complement the written material.

The interviews are performed when the Faculty Board has analysed the self-evaluations and other materials. The purpose of the meeting is to complement the picture given to the Faculty Board through the material. The board may, during the interviews, check whether the information in the material has been interpreted correctly, and there will be opportunities for clarifications of various kinds.

The interviews are planned well in advance, and coordinated with the Faculty Board's decision meetings. The time and place of the meetings are clear from the special timetable developed for the follow-up in question.

The Faculty Board performs interviews with three different groups. All interviews are normally performed consecutively over the course of one day.

First, the Faculty Board meets students from the concerned study programmes. Normally, at least five students participate, preferably more. The Student Union appoints the student representatives. The students are given access to the self-evaluation for their subject and programme in advance. In cases where the concerned students are unable to read Swedish, the Faculty Board provides an English language summary of the content.

Then, the Faculty Board meets the teacher representatives, normally the concerned subject coordinators and programme coordinators. Subject coordinators of the programme courses that are not part of the programme's main field of study normally participate as well. When it comes to education that includes placements, representatives of this education should also participate.

Lastly, the Faculty Board meets with the concerned head of school and heads of division.

Any interview material is to be sent to the participants at least one week before the meeting.

#### **2.4.2 Faculty Board's report**

The Faculty Board finalises a report for each subject and related study programmes, outlining strengths and development areas identified in connection with the follow-up.

The Faculty Board provides an assessment for each assessment area and the subordinate criteria (appendixes 1 and 2). The Faculty Board also provides a collective assessment for the subject or study programme as a whole.



The following three assessments are used for the collective assessment:

- Satisfactory: No development areas that risk affecting the education have been identified. Development areas may have been identified, however, that could further strengthen the education.
- Satisfactory with reservations: Development areas that need to be addressed in order to maintain the education's quality have been identified.
- Not satisfactory: Shortcomings that may seriously affect the quality of the education have been identified.

For each assessment area, the assessments 'satisfactory' or 'not satisfactory' are used. For each assessment criterion, it is noted whether it is met or not met.

Before the report is finalised, the representatives of the subject or study programme are given the opportunity to read, and comment on any errors in, the report. The report is normally finalised at a regular Faculty Board decision meeting.

The findings of the follow-up are communicated to relevant internal and external parties (see also section 3).

## **2.5 Feedback of planned and implemented improvement measures**

In cases where the follow-up has resulted in the collective assessment 'satisfactory with reservations' or 'not satisfactory,' the representatives of the subject or study programme are to provide feedback to the Faculty Board of planned and implemented improvement measures. In cases where the follow-up has resulted in the collective assessment 'satisfactory with reservations,' the feedback is given around a year after the completion of the follow-up. If the assessment 'not satisfactory' has been given, feedback is given after around six months.

The feedback shall contain a presentation of planned and implemented measures for the assessment areas that have been given the assessment 'not satisfactory.' If the implemented and/or planned measures aren't deemed sufficient to ensure the quality of the education, the case is passed to the Vice-Chancellor. The Vice-Chancellor will then decide, in consultation with the Faculty Board, whether further time for improvement procedures is to be given, or if the subject or study programme should be closed.

### 3 Division of responsibilities

The follow-up process includes the following responsibilities:

#### **Head of school and head of division at the concerned school:**

- set aside resources for the follow-up at the concerned school and division, mainly as working hours
- actively participate in the follow-up process by taking part in the initial meeting and interviews with the Faculty Board, contributing to and approving self-evaluations ahead of them being handed to the Faculty Board, etc.
- ensure that the findings of the follow-up are put to use and included in the work with developing the division's education, the school's operational planning, and the school's internal quality assurance procedures
- ensure that planned measures are communicated to concerned teachers and students
- ensure that the findings of the follow-up, and any planned measures for the development of the education, are communicated to the relevant external parties (external representatives of the degree programme's forum for work-linking, placement representatives, etc.)

#### **Concerned teachers (mainly subject coordinators and programme coordinators):**

- collate the self-evaluation, and supply relevant materials
- actively participate in the follow-up process by taking part in the initial meeting and interviews with the Faculty Board, etc.
- include the findings of the follow-up in work with developing the education

#### **Student Union**

- actively participate in the follow-up process through its representatives on the Faculty Board
- appoint students from the study programmes to participate in interviews with the Faculty Board

#### **Support Services directors**

- set aside resources at the concerned division for various forms of follow-up support, such as the generation of statistics and other factual materials, the development of system support for the generation of statistics, and internal/external communication of the follow-up findings

- include relevant findings from the follow-up in operation development procedures.

#### **Faculty Board**

- perform and document the follow-up
- communicate and make the findings of the follow-up available to the representatives of the subject or study programme, and concerned students (including in English if relevant), and disseminate the findings of the follow-up in the organisation
- communicate and make the findings of the follow-up available on the University's external website
- utilise experiences from the follow-up with the purpose of continuously improving the follow-up process

#### **Vice-Chancellor**

- include the findings of the follow-up in university-wide education, operation and quality system development.

## **4 Taking effect**

This document was finalised by the Faculty Board on the 21<sup>st</sup> of October, 2020, and applies to six-year follow-up procedures for subjects and related study programmes starting after this date. The document replaces “Guidelines for Six-Year Follow-Up of Courses and Study Programmes” from the 25<sup>th</sup> of September, 2018 (registration number HS 2018/523).

## **Appendix 1: Assessment areas and criteria for study programmes**

Study programmes are followed up within the framework of a number of assessment areas with associated criteria. The assessment areas and criteria are to be addressed in the self-evaluations provided by the school within the framework of the follow-up. More information about what data is to be given for each assessment criterion, and what material constitutes the basis for self-evaluation and assessment, can be found in the self-evaluation template provided by the Faculty Board.

### **Assessment area 1: Goal attainment**

#### **Assessment criterion:**

The subject or study programme's design, implementation and summative assessments (examinations) ensure that the students reach national learning outcomes when qualifications are awarded.

### **Assessment area 2: Progression**

#### **Assessment criterion:**

The subject or study programme's design, implementation and examinations ensure that the students reach national learning outcomes and local programme objectives through a progression of knowledge, skills and approaches in the programme.

### **Assessment area 3: Educational approach**

#### **Assessment criterion:**

The students' learning is promoted by an educational approach for the study programme.

### **Assessment area 4: Student completion**

#### **Assessment criterion 1:**

Entry requirements for the study programme are adequate, and promote both quality in the study programme, and education accessibility.

#### **Assessment criterion 2:**

Each student and student group is given good conditions in which to carry out and complete their studies within the planned programme length, without compromising the quality of the education or the set learning outcomes.

#### **Assessment criterion 3:**

Retention within the programme after one academic year is at least 85 % (applies to first-cycle programmes).

**Assessment criterion 4:**

The share of students registered on the programme who have received a qualification 1.5 years after the nominal programme length is at least 55 %.

**Assessment area 5: Courses that are not included in the programme's main field of study****Assessment criterion:**

The courses in the programme that are not included in the programme's main field of study, but in other subjects, have a clear function related to the field of knowledge covered by the programme. The courses contribute to the programme having a well-thought-out study route in terms of content and pedagogy.

**Assessment area 6: Relation to the theme of the University's development plan – digitalisation for sustainable development****Assessment criterion 1:**

The study programme integrates knowledge and skills related to 'digitalisation for sustainable development'.

**Assessment criterion 2:**

The programme syllabus includes at least one local objective connected to the theme 'digitalisation for sustainable development.'

**Assessment area 7: Teacher capacity and teacher competence****Assessment criterion:**

The number of teachers and their collective competence are adequate, and proportionate to the study programme's specialisation, content, scope, size and implementation, as well as its research basis.

**Assessment area 8: Research basis****Assessment criterion:**

The programme has a strong research basis, and a clear connection to one or more of the University's research environments.

**Assessment area 9: Links with the world of work****Assessment criterion 1:**

The education is practicably usable, and prepares students for their working lives.

**Assessment criterion 2:**

Relevant collaboration with wider society takes place.

**Assessment criterion 3:**

The students of the programme are attractive on the labour market, with a high degree of establishment.

**Assessment area 10: Student influence****Assessment criterion 1:**

Programme coordinators, course coordinators and other concerned staff work to ensure that students participate actively in work with developing the education.

**Assessment criterion 2:**

Feedback is always provided to concerned students following performed course and study programme evaluations. Course and study programme reports always include a summarising analysis collated by the responsible teacher (course or programme coordinator).

**Assessment criterion 3:**

Findings from course and programme evaluations are utilised, and used to further develop the degree programme and its constituent courses.

**Assessment area 11: Gender equality****Assessment criterion:**

A gender equality perspective is taken into consideration, communicated, and anchored in the content, design and implementation of the subject or study programme.

**Assessment area 12: Internationalisation****Assessment criterion 1:**

An international perspective is integrated in the study programme's design and implementation.

**Assessment criterion 2:**

Students within the programme have the opportunity to study abroad for at least one term (applies mainly to first-cycle programmes comprising 180 credits).

**Assessment criterion 3:**

The programme includes courses of at least 30 credits that are particularly suitable for students from foreign higher education institutions (applies mainly to first-cycle programmes comprising 180 credits).

## **Assessment area 13: Infrastructure**

### **Assessment criterion:**

There is a stable and suitable infrastructure for the study programme, provided by the school and the University's Support Services.

## **Appendix 2: Assessment areas and criteria for subjects**

Subjects are followed up within the framework of a number of assessment areas with associated criteria. The assessment areas and criteria are to be addressed in the self-evaluations provided by the division within the framework of the follow-up. More information about what data is to be given for each assessment criterion, and what material constitutes material for self-evaluation and assessment, can be found in the self-evaluation template provided by the Faculty Board.

### **Assessment area 1: Relevance and relation to the school's and the University's education**

#### **Assessment criterion:**

There is benefit from and demand for the subject, as related to the school's and the University's range of programmes.

### **Assessment area 2: Definition and classification**

#### **Assessment criterion 1:**

The subject definition is brief, and pinpoints the core of the subject. Any local adoption of a profile for the subject at the University of Skövde is clear from the definition.

#### **Assessment criterion 2:**

The subject has an adequate classification in a disciplinary domain, and in a national main field of study group and subject group.

### **Assessment area 3: Quality assurance procedures**

#### **Assessment criterion:**

Systematic quality assurance procedures are in place to assure and develop the subject's quality.

### **Assessment area 4: Teacher capacity and teacher competence**

#### **Assessment criterion 1:**

The number of teachers and their collective competence are adequate, and proportionate to the education and education research basis that is to exist within the subject (main field of study or resource subject). Normally, all teachers are to be employed at the University, and a majority should be permanently employed.



**Guidelines for the number of permanently employed full-time teachers are as follows:**

	<b>Main field of study, first-cycle</b>	<b>Main field of study, Master level (60 credits)</b>	<b>Main field of study, Master level (120 credits)</b>	<b>Resource subject</b>
<b>Academic and artistic competence</b>	At least four teachers with a Degree of Doctor (or the equivalent artistic competence), of which at least one is a professor	At least six teachers with a Degree of Doctor (or the equivalent artistic competence), of which at least one is a professor, and one is a docent	At least ten teachers with a Degree of Doctor (or the equivalent artistic competence), of which at least two are professors, and two are docents	At least one teacher with a Degree of Doctor (or the equivalent artistic competence)
<b>Teaching competence</b>	At least two accredited university teachers or distinguished university teachers	At least two accredited university teachers or distinguished university teachers	At least two accredited university teachers or distinguished university teachers	At least one accredited university teacher or distinguished university teacher
<b>Profession-related competence</b>	At least two teachers with profession-related competence (this should especially be taken into consideration for subjects that constitute specializations or equivalent in a professional qualification)	At least two teachers with profession-related competence (this should especially be taken into consideration for subjects that constitute specializations or equivalent in a professional qualification)	At least two teachers with profession-related competence (this should especially be taken into consideration for subjects that constitute specializations or equivalent in a professional qualification)	

**Assessment criterion 2:**

There is scope and conditions for teachers' competence development (academic/subject-related and pedagogical), both individually and for the subject working group as a whole.

**Assessment area 5: Course quality of selected courses**

**Assessment criterion 1:**

The course content is relevant in relation to the definition of the subject the course belongs to.

**Assessment criterion 2:**

The content of the course shall rest on a scientific or artistic basis, and on proven experience<sup>4</sup>.

**Assessment criterion 3:**

Admission requirements shall be equivalent to the requirements for first- and second-cycle education respectively<sup>5</sup>.

**Assessment criterion 4:**

The intended course objectives shall be equivalent to the requirements for first- and second-cycle education respectively<sup>6</sup>.

**Assessment criterion 5:**

Types of instruction, required reading and other teaching materials, modes of assessment and grading criteria shall be adequate in relation to the intended course objectives<sup>7</sup>.

**Assessment criterion 6:**

The course shall, on the whole, be set up in such a way that students have good chances of achieving the intended course objectives<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Courses in access programmes and contract education are to be related to the relevant regulations, mainly relevant ordinances and (for qualifying education) the Swedish National Agency for Education's description of subject and course content in the equivalent upper secondary school courses.

<sup>5</sup> Not relevant for follow-up of courses in access programmes and contract education.

<sup>6</sup> Not relevant for follow-up of courses in access programmes and non-credit-bearing contract education.

<sup>7</sup> When following up non-credit-bearing contract courses, 'intended course learning outcomes' can be replaced with 'course content'.

<sup>8</sup> When following up non-credit-bearing contract courses, 'achieving the intended course learning outcomes' can be replaced with 'assimilating the course content'.

## Appendix 3: Schematic timetable

The below table outlines a schematic timetable for follow-up of subjects and study programmes within an area. The timetable normally covers around nine months.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Month 1	Initial meeting
Month 1	External reviewers are appointed, and gain access to the degree projects that are to be reviewed
Month 3 or 4	The self-evaluations and material from external reviewers are handed to the Faculty Board
Month 7	The Faculty Board interviews representatives of the subject and study programme and student representatives
Month 8	A preliminary report is sent to the representatives of the subject and study programme (for comments on any errors)
Month 9	The Faculty Board finalises the report