THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN
(HERE WITH THE ENGLISH TITLE "OUR VISION: 2017–2022")
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FORWARD

The development plan for 2017–2022 sets a vision for the University of Skövde and will serve as a benchmark when decisions are made and priorities are taken regarding future activities at our seat of learning.

At the heart of this development plan is the vision which focuses on academic specialisation and excellence, as well as care for students, staff and society. All of us who work at the University – regardless of in which capacity – must relate to these key words in our daily work. Anyone who meets an employee at the University must feel that this meeting is characterized by care and positive treatment. A student-centered culture is a matter of course, and an aspiration for excellence must prevail where the academic environment is prominent as well as of high quality.

It is necessary that all academic fields of study in different ways contribute to sustainable development in society. The academic disciplines must also relate to the extensive digitalisation which affects our lives in every way. The University can, within both education and research, contribute to using the transformative power of digitalisation as a tool for contributing to a sustainable society. Against this background, the University wants to connect its prominent education and research environments to the interdisciplinary theme Digitalisation for sustainable development. This theme is related to the collective activity which includes the University in its role as a learning environment, work environment, and a government agency.

The vision, the interdisciplinary theme, and the objectives in the development plan are the result of several major development and investigation missions the University of Skövde carried out in 2015 and 2016. The University, for example, let a panel of external experts do a complete analysis of the total selection of courses and programmes at our seat of learning. The recommendations, based on this analysis leave, together with the basis which other investigations and development missions have provided us with, a concrete mark on the development plan. These achievements and strong commitment from the University Board as well as from employees and the Student Union guarantee that this document is based on very solid ground.

Our development plan describes the vision and position the University wants to reach in the future. The objectives set in the plan are in many cases challenging, but at the University there is a great degree of competence, commitment, and creativity which combined contribute to the realization of these objectives. Collaboration with the surrounding society is yet another important strategic component for the fulfillment of our objectives. Our hope is that the development plan will constitute an important instrument in our daily work on reaching the highly-set goals.

Education and research at the University of Skövde must – with an approach based on the key words prominence, excellence, and care for students, staff and society as well as through the theme Digitalisation for sustainable development – help society meet the great challenges of today and tomorrow.

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I SKÖVDE
The Development Plan for the University of Skövde 2017–2022 takes its point of departure in the key words *prominence, excellence, and care for students, staff and society*. The vision and the goals for the activities can be summarized in the following way:

- The University of Skövde is a prominent seat of learning. Education and research are carried out in selected academic environments where there are opportunities to create the critical mass desired for progress and development. Interdisciplinary interaction characterizes and strengthens these environments.
- All work is excellent. This means that the academic activities are of very high quality and are internationally competitive. There is a clear and strong connection between education and research.
- The activities at the University are to be characterized by care which means responsibility and care for students, colleagues, and society. This care is concretized in a culture where colleagues and students take good care of each other. This culture is rooted in the national basic values.
- The theme digitalisation for sustainable development connects the University's education and research environments. Primarily, this means that the digital technology's importance for a sustainable society is to be a factor. The theme has a clear link to the key word care – care for society.
- An excellent learning environment is created through focus on pedagogical development, a pedagogical career ladder, student impact, and good infrastructure. The infrastructure includes both the physical as well as the digital environment and well-developed student support.
- A high degree of externally funded research makes the development of creative and attractive research environments possible, for researchers as well as doctoral students.
- Research studies are carried out internally within three fields – informatics as well as two other fields.
- The University is an attractive workplace characterized by a professional leadership and an emphasis on developing collegial relationships.
- An inclusive and deliberate approach characterizes the University's work for equality and equal opportunities. Widened participation strengthens the quality of courses and programmes.
- The University has a well-developed quality system. Students and colleagues contribute, based on their roles, actively and systematically to the quality in the academic activities being ensured and improved.
- Internationalization strengthens University activities and prepares the students for the surrounding world, which is increasingly being affected by global events.

Collaboration and innovation are supported by platforms for collaboration where higher education and society meet. Those platforms are made up of arenas for exchange of knowledge and dialogues where the University's teachers and researchers meet representatives of the labour market and external organizations. Each education and research environment constitutes the driving force for at least one active collaboration platform.
1.1 MISSION

The University of Skövde’s mission – just like that of other universities and university colleges in Sweden – is defined in the Higher Education Act. Universities and university colleges must provide education with a scientific basis and proven experience. The seats of learning are also to conduct research and development work. Furthermore, this mission also includes collaboration with the surrounding society, i.e. the general public, the business sector, the public sector, and different organizations.

All work at the University starts from the mission to educate and do research – and to do this in collaboration with the surrounding society. Education and research at the University should, in accordance with the government’s objective in Budget Proposition 2016/17:1, contribute to Sweden distinguishing itself as “a prominent knowledge and research nation characterized by high quality.”

The purpose of the Development Plan is to provide a complete picture of how comprehensive missions and objectives can best be met in the period 2017–2022. This is done through general objective descriptions as well as pointing out specific indicators. The Development Plan is to be broken down and concretized in separate steps, first in joint university action plans and then in activity plans for the Schools and supporting units.

1.2 VISION

The following vision has been formulated for the University:

*The University of Skövde is a university with an academic profile where education and research are gathered in selected and excellent environments. The activities are carried out in an academic culture characterized by care for students, colleagues, and society.*

The vision can be summarized in the key words academic profiling, excellence, and care for students, staff and society.

- **Academic profiling** entails that the University carries out its academic activities within selected research and educational environments. The selection of environments is based on conscious and strategic standpoints. Academic profiling entails possibilities to make concerted efforts and to develop.

- **Excellence** entails that all activities at the University must be of very high quality and be internationally competitive. The demand for very high quality permeates all education and all research as well as all activities supporting education and research.

- **Care** entails that all activities at the University are to be characterized by responsibility and care for people and society. This care is concretized for students and colleagues in a culture based in our national basic values. This care also relates to the University’s unifying theme digitalisation for sustainable development. In this theme, care is concretized for society at large since digitalisation can contribute to a sustainable society.

1) The national basic values are built on the six basic principles concerning democracy, legality, objectivity, free opinion formation, respect for equal value, freedom and dignity as well as efficiency.
DIGITALISATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – A UNIFYING THEME
Digitalisation for sustainable development is to be a unifying theme for the University of Skövde. This means that perspectives on digitalisation and sustainability in different ways are to be integrated into the activities of our seat of learning. Primarily, this is about making use of the opportunities of digitalisation to contribute to a sustainable society. This theme also clearly relates to the key word care since sustainable development aims at providing all the people with a healthy environment, financial and social well-being, and justice.

Background
Digitalisation is what happens when activities are developed and change with the help of digital technology. Today, digital technology not only makes things possible but is also essentially a driving force behind how we experience the world, do things, undertake tasks, and find solutions. Digitalisation means “a revolutionary transformation of the most important parts of society – growth and sustainability, welfare and equality, safety and democracy.”

At the same time, the world is facing major sustainability challenges. The Higher Education Act goals of promoting sustainable development are concretized in the UN’s Agenda 2030. The Agenda forms a natural starting point for sustainability work. In the 17 global goals of the Agenda, the three dimensions of sustainability are balanced: the financial, the social, and the environmental dimensions.

The digital agenda for Sweden from 2011 stresses the importance of digitalisation for a sustainable society. “Digitalisation can contribute to meeting these challenges; it can be about new ways of designing solutions for an aging society (e-health, digital tools), digital solutions for the environment (smart power grids, intelligent transport systems), promoting cultural diversity (digital distribution of cultural content), democracy (transparent administration, a system for dialogue with decision-makers), increased competitiveness for companies (digital competence, new products, services, and business models as well as more efficient operation with the help of IT) and so on.”

In the Research Proposition for the coming ten-year period, the climate and the environment, increased digitalisation, and a sustainable society are emphasized as prioritized areas among others. Within these areas, special efforts will, according to the preposition, be made to meet the global and national challenges for society.

The role of higher education in the development of a digital and sustainable society is therefore central. Research as well as education within many fields are necessary in order to make use of the possibilities that digitalisation entails. Digitalisation is a positive force, but it also involves challenges that must be elucidated and handled. It is about providing a combination of broad knowledge and specialisation in courses and educational programmes, and through research to collaborate with companies and organizations in the development of digital solutions, and also to contribute to the development of a civilian society.

It is for care for society that the University of Skövde chooses digitalisation for sustainable development as a theme. Sustainable development means that society changes for the better – that today’s and future generations will have a healthy and good environment, financial and social well-being as well as justice. The University is to be the arena where the latest knowledge about how information technology tools and systems can contribute to a sustainable society is handed over from the older to the younger generation.

Foundation
The field of informatics has been a hub and a strength in the University activities since the beginning of the 1990s. The development has been expansive and successful, and today the University has a strong position nationally as well as internationally within education and research in informatics. This provides us with a good foundation for the chosen theme.

3) Swedish translation from the UN’s Transforming our world: The 2030 agenda for sustainable development, Appendix 3 in Government decision 2016-04-07 (Fi2016/01355/SFO)
4) The Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, 2011: IT in the service of man – a digital agenda for Sweden (Registration number 2011/342/ITP)
5) The /National// Government, 2016: Collaborative knowledge – for the challenges of society and increased competitiveness (Proposition 2016/1750)
The influence of digitalisation is extensive and multifaceted. Digitalisation offers new possibilities for the development of a sustainable society, but it also brings new challenges. In order to fully make use of the potential of digitalisation in the development of a sustainable society, an interdisciplinary approach where possibilities and challenges can be elucidated from several different perspectives is therefore required. The University not only has a broad range of competence in the basic discipline of informatics but also within different areas of implementation related to the business sector, the public sector, and the civilian society. Thus there are good opportunities to further digitalisation, via interdisciplinary approaches and collaboration, within different areas.

In terms of research and focus, the conditions to make contributions which meet the challenges of the development toward a digital and sustainable society are consequently favorable at the University. The University therefore is making concerted efforts to develop high-quality education and research with a connection to the theme *digitalisation for sustainable development*. This gives the academic environment a clear identity and a prominent position – and equips the students for tomorrow’s professional life where questions regarding digitalisation and sustainable development will be central.

**Chosen theme in education**
Digitalisation and sustainable development have an effect on most social functions within the business sector as well as the public sector. This requires that colleagues have the competence to take advantage of the opportunities of digitalisation in a sustainable way that activities on the whole are carried out in a sustainable way, and that business results contribute to a sustainable society.

All courses and programmes offered at the University are therefore in an integrated way to give knowledge and skills related to *digitalisation for sustainable development* within the programme-specific field. There is to be at least one local goal related to the theme digitalisation for sustainable development in the programme syllabus for each study programme. In courses and programmes leading to specialist skills within the field of digitalisation, sustainability aspects of digitalisation are to be integrated.

**Chosen theme in research**
The University of Skövde is to be a highly visible actor in the research arena within areas which relate to the theme *digitalisation for sustainable development*. This theme concerns important issues for the future, regionally as well as nationally and internationally.

Aspects concerning digitalisation and sustainability are to be integrated into specific research projects within every research environment. Interdisciplinary interaction is to be aimed at. The theme *digitalisation for sustainable development* is to be a driving force for the development of new research projects. Furthermore, a clear approach to this theme is to characterize all the environments. The research groups are to analyze the relevance of research for the global sustainability goals and relate digitalisation to this.

**Chosen theme for the University as a learning environment, working environment, and government agency**
The theme *digitalisation for sustainable development* is to be related to the collective activity at our seat of learning. This includes the University in the role as a learning environment, working environment, and government agency.

The utilization of digital technology is a requirement for the development of excellent educational and research environments. The opportunities that digital technology brings are to be fully made use of in courses and programmes as well as in support and infrastructure related to education and research. An important intention with digitalisation is to provide good service to students, colleagues, and the general public. This work is to be done strategically and in a long-term manner in order to further accessibility, efficiency, and quality. This requires an overall university responsibility for the management, control, and coordination of digital support.

Work on systematic improvement related to sustainable development is to be pursued within all parts of our University. Sustainability work is in different ways to be visible in the University’s activities. The work is to be developed and quality is to be assured in accordance with national and international directives for environment management and sustainable development. The University’s efforts within this field are to produce results in the Environmental Protection Agency’s ranking of the environment management work in Swedish government agencies.
3.1 SUMMARY OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSES AND PROGRAMMES

The activities at the University of Skövde in 2022 will reflect the following:

- The teaching takes place within selected and excellent environments. The quality of teaching is very high; it includes a learning perspective, and it is clearly and strongly related to the research conducted at the University. Interdisciplinary interaction strengthens the different environments.

- The learning environment is excellent. The views and experiences of students and alumni are systematically drawn upon. A great deal of focus is put on pedagogical development and ensuring the teachers' pedagogical skills. Not only the physical environment but also the digital environment and student support and other infrastructure, to a great extent, promote students' learning.

- Close collaboration with the surrounding society creates useful courses and programmes and students who are attractive on the labour market. Efforts to broaden recruitment and equal treatment strengthen the quality of the courses and programmes. The academic completion in courses and programmes is high.

- The key word care, which is closely related to the national value system, is concretized both in the academic culture and in the theme digitalisation for sustainable development.

3.2 ACADEMIC PROFILING, THEME, AND SELECTION

Academic profiling means that courses and programmes take place in selected environments where there are opportunities for concerted efforts and development. Conscious and strategic positions – based on the objective about excellent activities – are the basis for our choice of environments.

The environments are connected in the common theme digitalisation for sustainable development. This theme means that perspectives regarding digitalisation and sustainability are to be integrated in the courses and programmes. All the students in the University’s courses and programmes at the doctoral level are to be given an insight into the possibilities and challenges related to digitalisation and the work on the global sustainability goals.

Collaboration across subject and department boundaries is to be encouraged and taken advantage of. This collaboration can make a development of the selection of courses and programmes possible, in particular, in relation to the overall university theme.

Courses and education programmes are to be offered at both the undergraduate and graduate level within each education environment. The advanced level is to include master’s programmes, under our own management or in collaboration with other universities. The students are also to be given the opportunity to continue with studies at the doctoral level, either through the University’s own doctoral study programmes or through studies in collaboration with other seats of learning. Studies at doctoral level are described in more detail in Section 4.4.

Study programmes at the basic university level are to normally encompass 180 credits. Strategic reasons, for example, the possibility to widen recruitment or regional needs, can also lead to the offering of study programmes at the basic level encompassing 120 credits. The students in these programmes are to be given clear and well-structured opportunities to change to programmes encompassing 180 credits.

There is to be a good balance between the different levels as well as between education with the aim to obtain a degree and for further education. Here, further education entails primarily short-time education done by people who are already working. In general, the number and percentage of students at advanced level is to increase.

There is to be close collaboration with the surrounding society in relation to the need for study programmes as well as independent courses. The University’s courses and programmes are to be useful and develop the students’ preparedness for meeting changes in their professional lives.
3.3 QUALITY AND ATTRACTION

All courses and programmes at the University are to be excellent, that is to be of very high quality. This means that the education has a very strong link to research and proven experience, that it gives the students good opportunities to attain course objectives and degree objectives, and that it is relevant for a professional life in a broad sense. Education of very high quality also includes a learning perspective which helps the individual student develop as a member of society and as a human being. The results of the internal and external course evaluations which are done continuously are to show that all the courses and programmes at the University are of very high quality.

A strong research connection is primarily created by a close link between the courses and programmes and current activities within the research environments. Each study programme is to have a clear link to at least one of the University’s research environments. It is also important that teachers with a doctorate to a large extent participate in and take responsibility for the courses and programmes. Proven experience is ensured by teachers with competence in the field of work.

Learning is a life-long process which includes several components, for example to acquire knowledge and participate in discussions. Learning is also about independently reflecting on, assessing, and making critical judgments, which constitutes part of the academic culture. The University’s courses and programmes are to include the learning perspective but also stimulate learning in a life-long respect.

Education of a very high quality creates attraction. This attraction is created in a long-term process through communication between students, via alumni and hiring employers, and through the power of success among those who become self-employed. Students and alumni are to be so satisfied with their education that they want to recommend it to others. The University’s students are to be attractive on the labour market and have a high degree of becoming established.

Recruiting students is a prioritized area. Courses and programmes are to be made visible through active marketing. The information about courses and programmes is to be clear, correct, objective, up-to-date, and accessible. Aspects concerning widening participation, equality, and equal opportunities are to be observed in the recruitment work. In collaboration with the immediate region, Skövde is to be promoted as an attractive place to study.

3.4 STUDENT IMPACT

The students’ participation in the development of courses and programmes is very important in order to achieve an excellent learning environment. This participation can occur in different ways, formally as well as informally. Student impact must be systematic and tangible within all the educational environments.

The formal system comprises standardized course and programme evaluations done at the end of the course and during some semesters in a study programme. There is more freedom within the framework of informal student impact, this is something the teacher or group of teachers are responsible for. The teacher or group of teachers can find different ways to obtain, through a dialogue with the students, increased knowledge of how well a course supports the students’ learning.

The students’ views of the education they receive, which are primarily documented in course evaluations and programme evaluations, constitute an essential tool to follow up and evaluate courses and programmes. The teachers are to encourage and support student participation in this work. Feedback is always to be given to the students concerned after completed course and programme evaluations.

Work with alumni is to be intensified and developed in order to better take advantage of former students’ experiences of the University. The alumni are to be visible for students and colleagues and be a resource in the University’s strategic development and day-to-day work.

3.5 PEDAGOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

Pedagogical development is to be a natural part of the University’s activities and the career advancement of individual teachers. Attaching great importance to pedagogical development is a necessity for an excellent learning environment.
The pedagogical development is to start from an academic teaching role. An academic teaching role first and foremost means a scientific approach to knowledge and learning as well as one’s own teaching practice. A teacher who is knowledgeable in their subject is, through a systematic and reflective way of working, to develop his/her pedagogical competence. The pedagogical career path is to be well established, and there are to be clear incitements to reach the two different levels of the career path: well-qualified teacher and excellent teacher. All teachers must be offered training in creating a pedagogical professional portfolio.

The teachers at the University are to be encouraged to use a variety of pedagogical methods in order to support student-centered learning. For this support, there are to be a number of well-established pedagogical starting points at the University. Pedagogical development projects are to be carried out continuously – within the academic subjects, between related subjects, and in collaboration with the students. The projects are to serve as inspiration and a driving force for the development of the University’s collective excellent learning environment. The effect of these projects is to be drawn on, documented, discussed, and spread to colleagues and students concerned.

Pedagogical development is to be supported by joint university resources as well as well-qualified and excellent teachers within the different academic subjects.

3.6 INFRASTRUCTURE AND CULTURE
The needs of the University’s teaching activities are to evolve into functional solutions both in the physical and the digital environment. Digitalisation presents new opportunities for discussions between students and teachers. The University is to be attractive and a driving force in the development of digital forms for learning, communication, and administration. The digital support is to be tailor-made, support the students’ learning, and contribute to high quality in courses and programmes.

The school premises are to be flexible in order to support different pedagogical methods. A great part of learning is informal and social. For this reason, all rooms – not only the lecture rooms – are to inspire learning.

The University is to take advantage of and combine the opportunities which technology as well as the physical environment offer. In this way, meetings between teachers and students that entail good student results are created. The infrastructure for the students’ learning is also to include well-developed student support. The students are to have access to methods, support, and guidance to develop not only themselves but also their skills.

Besides infrastructure, culture is an important dimension of the learning environment. Culture is about relations, collaboration, and basic values. A positive culture is characterized by respect for students and colleagues, transparency in processes, care, a friendly attitude, commitment to studies and work, and job satisfaction. These concepts clearly relate to the national basic values. This culture is to encourage cooperation and at the same time make room for an individual to develop. This positive culture serves as inspiration and a driving force for students and colleagues – and it is a requirement for an excellent learning environment.

Student surveys are to be conducted regularly with the aim of following up the work on the excellent learning environment.

3.7 BROADER RECRUITMENT AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
Broader recruitment of students is defined as recruiting students from groups which in different ways are underrepresented at universities and university colleges. Everybody is to be given equal opportunities to study at university level regardless of gender, ethnicity, social background, disabilities or other aspects. The unequal recruitment of students which still exists is to be countered. Universities as well as society are enriched when the knowledge and competence potential which exists in society are incorporated.

6) Svensk-engelsk ordbok för den högre utbildningen. UHR: https://www.uhr.se/publikationer/svensk-engelsk-ordbok/breddad-rekrytering [the Swedish word for “participation” is usually translated into “recruitment”]
At the University of Skövde, broader recruitment is regarded as a question of democracy and quality. The diversity in society is to be reflected within the University's courses and programmes. Diversity among the students also brings with it new perspectives and broader experience – thereby increasing the quality of the education. Direct recruitment measures are to be directed towards underrepresented groups.

The work on broader recruitment is to have a broad and inclusive focus. Barriers to access education are to be removed, and adequate systems for validation of actual competence must be developed. These measures are to support broader recruitment in general – and specifically bring about better opportunities to take advantage of the competence which immigration to Sweden entails. Newly arrived refugees' needs for introduction, integration, and establishment on the Swedish labour market are to be given special attention. Collaboration with other actors, primarily regionally, will strengthen the University's work on broader recruitment.

Broader recruitment not only means recruitment efforts but also responsibility for widened participation. The students are to be given a warm welcome and good support during their entire study time. There is a strong connection to the University's work for equal opportunities. The University is to be engaged in active work to counter discrimination, and in other ways support equal rights and opportunities for all students. An inclusive and conscious approach is to characterize the University's work for equal opportunities. Regulatory documents as well as teaching methods are to promote inclusiveness.

3.8 ACADEMIC COMPLETION

Academic completion in courses and programmes, i.e. that the students complete their studies in courses and programmes with pass grades, is a common concern for students and for our University. The University, without compromising with the quality of courses and programmes and set objectives, is to create conditions for as many students as possible to complete their studies. The students are also to be encouraged to graduate with a degree upon the completion of their studies.

The fact that students complete their studies is, in the long term, a very important issue, for the individual as well as for society on the whole. The University is to continue to develop tools and methods which support increased academic completion and an increase in the graduation rate. Efforts aimed at pedagogical development, work for broader participation and equal opportunities, and continuous connections to the labour market in courses and education programmes are examples of important conditions for high academic completion. High quality information about courses and programmes, creating realistic expectations among potential students, is also of great importance for the academic completion. Academic completion rate and rate of graduation are to be continually followed up, and both low and high values of these parameters are to be analyzed.

3.9 INDICATORS FOR COURSES AND PROGRAMMES IN 2022

- The percentage of students within courses and programmes at advanced level is at least 15% (comparative data for 2016: 6%).
- The University's courses and programmes are so attractive and well-known that on average there are at least 1.6 formally qualified first-choice applicants to each admitted student to courses and programmes (comparative data for fall semester 2016: 1.2%).
- The response rate in course evaluations is on average at least 60% (comparative data for spring semester 2016: 24%).
- Of the teachers with permanent employment, at least 50% have reached the career level well-qualified teacher and at least 15% the level excellent teacher (comparative data for 2016: 9% well-qualified teachers and 0.4% excellent teachers). There is at least one excellent teacher in each academic subject in subjects that make up a main field of study.
- The academic completion after one academic year in the University's programmes at basic university level is at least 85% (comparative data: the academic completion in programmes starting fall semester 2015 was, after one academic year, 74%).
- The percentage of students who have been registered in the University's programmes at basic university level and advanced level and who graduate with a degree 1.5 years after nominal study time is at least 55% (comparative data for programmes at basic university level starting fall semester 2012: 41%).
RESEARCH
4.1 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES
The activities at the University of Skövde in the year 2022 will reflect the following:

- Research is carried out within selected and excellent environments. The quality of the research is very high, and it has a clear and strong connection to the courses and programmes being taught at the University. Interdisciplinary interaction strengthens the different environments.

- Knowledge dissemination takes place via high quality and frequently-cited publications as well as via exposure in society as a whole. A high degree of externally financed research makes the development of creative and attractive environments possible, both for researchers and for doctoral students.

- The University has the right to award doctoral degrees within three fields – informatics, a field linked to health and healthcare, and within one additional field.

4.2 ACADEMIC PROFILING, THEME AND QUALITY
Academic profiling entails that research is carried out in selected environments where there are opportunities for concerted efforts and development. Conscious and strategic standpoints – founded in the objective about excellence – make up the basis for the choice of environments. These environments are connected in the common theme digitalisation for sustainable development. This means that perspectives regarding this theme must be integrated into the research projects within all the environments.

The research that is carried out at the University must be excellent, i.e. be of very high quality. Quality in research means that it has an impact both from a scientific as well as a societal perspective. The research is to contribute to both theory formation and practical application. Work with clear elements of co-production will be prioritized.

Interaction between the academic subjects and different departments is to be encouraged and be made use of. This collaboration can make the development of interdisciplinary collaboration possible, especially when related to the overall university theme. Research is also to be strengthened through strategic collaboration with other universities.

Teaching is always to be carried out in connection with research. The opposite also applies; research is, over time, always to be linked to teaching. For that reason, each research environment is to have a clear connection to one or more of the University's study programmes.

4.3 PUBLICATION AND RESEARCH COMMUNICATION
Publication, i.e. scientific production, is important for the dissemination of knowledge and utilization of the research which is conducted. Publications move the University’s research forward and form the point of departure for future research. Furthermore, publications are often one of the most important grounds on which researchers are judged when applying for external research funding, promotion or new employment.

The University wants to promote a development where the number of high-quality published articles from the University's researchers will increase, primarily within channels that have a good reputation within their own scientific field. As far as possible, the articles should be published in openly accessible journals or be parallel published. Parallel publication means that an article is made freely accessible in an open archive at the same time as the article is published, or first has been published, in a publishing-house journal. Publishing in open archives supports, according to Unesco7, the work with the global sustainability goals8. Openly accessible articles also provide opportunities for greater exposure for the University.

7) The United Nations’ organization for creating peace through increased cooperation between its member countries within education, science, culture, and communication/information
8) http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/access-to-knowledge/open-access-to-scientific-information
The citation rate of the publications indicates their importance for the development of the research field concerned. Cited high-quality publications increase the University’s competitiveness both nationally as well as internationally. The choice of publication channels is important for the research impact, and researchers are to be given support within this area.

Research results are also to be disseminated to society in other ways than by being published. Knowledge dissemination is to be aimed at different target groups – which may be financiers, society, industry, or the general public. By systematically communicating research results, the University will increase the interest in research, researchers, and higher education. Therefore, at the University there is to be a systematic targeted way of working with research communication.

4.4 STUDIES AT DOCTORAL LEVEL
A certain volume of courses and programmes at doctoral level contributes to active and creative research environments. Both the number of doctoral students and the number of doctoral degrees are to increase during the period 2017–2022. The results of the internal and external evaluations, which are done continuously, are to show that the University’s studies at doctoral level are of very high quality.

The University’s courses and programmes at doctoral level in informatics – in which the right to award doctoral degrees has existed since 2010 – is to be used as a collaborative and inter-School resource. The University’s chosen theme *digitalisation for sustainable development* strengthens the opportunities for further specialisations, in the form of different postgraduate subjects, within the field of informatics. These new specialisations can be connected to several of the University’s teaching and research environments. A broadening of the courses and programmes, however, requires a well-developed quality system for the testing of new subjects. The new subjects within the courses and programmes must contribute to the research within informatics.

A further aim is that the University be given the right, under its own management, to carry out postgraduate studies within two other fields, in addition to the field of informatics. One of these new programmes where the University has the right to award degrees is to be linked to the field of health and health care in accordance with the special priority given to teaching and research within this field during this period.

Within the areas that partially or completely lack the right to award degrees at doctoral level, there is to be strategic collaboration with other universities. Through this kind of collaboration, all the students at the University have the opportunity to continue with studies at doctoral level. External collaboration can also take place within courses and programmes where the University has the right to award degrees in order to create a larger volume of courses and a stimulating environment for the doctoral students. It can be beneficial to use research school as the form of organization.

4.5 RESEARCH FUNDING
Research and postgraduate studies are to increase in volume which can primarily be done through increased external funding. An increased volume will entail opportunities both to strengthen the connection with the research environment and to develop collaboration with the surrounding society. An increase in research funding entails that the percentage of research of the University’s total activities will increase.

Special efforts will be made in order to raise the level of granting from certain financiers, primarily from the national research councils and the European Union’s framework programme. There is to be a wide spread when it comes to financiers since this strengthens the long-term durability of the research areas. The University’s infrastructure is to be developed in terms of supporting researchers’ efforts in seeking external funding.
4.6 Indicators for Research in 2022

- The percentage of published articles in channels regarded as the leading and most prestigious ones within each respective field is at least 25% (comparative data year 2016: 22%).
- The percentage of widely cited articles, i.e. articles which can be found among the 10% most cited ones within each respective field within a four-year period, is at least 10% (comparative data year 2012–2015: 8.6%).
- The University has the right to conduct postgraduate studies under its own management within three fields (comparative data year 2016: one field).
- The number of doctoral students who are accepted during the years 2017–2022 is at least 90 (comparative data year 2011–2016: 63). At least 50 of these are admitted to doctoral studies carried out under the University’s own management (comparative data year 2011–2016: 37).
- The number of doctoral degrees awarded during the years 2017–2022 is at least 70 (comparative data year 2011–2016: 63). At least 40 of these are in doctoral studies carried out under the University’s own management (comparative data year 2011–2016: 7).
- Research funding makes up at least 40% of the University’s total revenue (comparative data year 2016: 28%). This target is based on a forecast where the volume of courses and programmes more or less is unchanged compared to the starting point in the year 2016.
- The proportion of external research funding of the total revenue for research is at least 70% (comparative data year 2016: 63%).
- The proportion of revenue from the three research councils Vetenskapsrådet [the Swedish Research Council], Forskningsrådet för hälsa, arbetsliv och välfärd [the Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life and Welfare], and Forskningsrådet för miljö, areella näringar och samhällsbyggnande [the Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning] of the total revenue for research is at least 10% (comparative data year 2016: 4%).
- The proportion of revenue made up of EU funds of the total revenue for research is at least 10% (comparative data year 2016: 7%).

In the following section, the following areas are discussed: general areas of concern for the whole university, leadership and employees, equality, quality assurance, internationalization, innovation and visibility. Where appropriate, the text is divided into subsections for education and research.

Digitalisation and sustainable development, which are relevant to the whole university, are covered at the beginning of section 2 as they constitute the University’s common theme.
5.1 SUMMARY OF THE GOALS FOR THE UNIVERSITY’S OVERALL CONCERNS

The work at the University of Skövde in 2022 will reflect the following:

- The University is an attractive place of work which is characterized by professional leadership and an active collegiality. The work is characterized by a good working environment and a good academic culture. The University’s key word care and the state’s basic values form the basis of the culture.

- The division of gender has become more balanced within the University’s various educational and research areas – and within the various groups and categories of employees. A gender perspective is integrated into the studies, research and support services and also in the processes for the leadership and management of the work.

- The University will have a well-developed quality assurance system which entails systematic follow up, reflection and continual improvements of the work – but also that the quality assurance system is a natural part of the day-to-day work. Colleagues and students are to contribute actively, based on their roles, in the quality work.

- Collaboration with foreign universities enhances quality within courses and programmes, research and support services. There will be good opportunities for student and staff exchanges. Experience of international work is to be encouraged and considered a merit. The University’s work is to have an international and multicultural dimension.

- Special collaboration platforms – where academia and the public meet – will contribute to the choice of courses and programmes offered according to market needs, to the transfer of knowledge and competence between partners and also the use of research results. Work procedures which are aimed at specific target groups for external communication will make the University visible to the surrounding society.

5.2 LEADERS AND COLLEAGUES

Colleagues at the University of Skövde are the University’s most important asset. The University is to be an attractive workplace where potential colleagues seek employment and where already employed colleagues are given an opportunity for development.

Important aspects to create an attractive workplace include well-functioning structures for competency and competence development, a good working environment, and, not least, a good culture where positive ethical values are given emphasis and encouraged. The basis for this stems from professional leadership and active collegiality.

Culture and work environment

As a learning environment and workplace, the University is to be characterized by a good culture. Culture entails relationships, collaboration and basic values. A good culture in the workplace is characterized by respect for students and colleagues, openness towards processes, care, pleasant interaction, involvement in one’s work and pleasure in work. The concepts clearly relate to the State’s basic values. The culture is to encourage collaboration and at the same time give the individual the opportunity to develop. Collaboration and the exchange of experience between different groups of colleagues, in particular between researchers and teaching staff and administrative personnel, is to be encouraged.

Academic values, i.e. the collegial structures and the academic work are based on scientific or artistic foundations, are also typical of the culture. This includes the fact that the University has a societal responsibility where education and research contribute to society’s long-term and sustainable development.

Good culture provides the inspiration and driving force for students and colleagues – and it is a prerequisite for excellence within education and research.

Culture is the core of the organizational and social work environment. The University is working continuously to keep and improve a good working environment from all aspects. To promote a safe, secure and healthy working environment is in keeping with the global goals for sustainability. Working with work environment is closely connected to the work for equal opportunity. The University is to work actively to discourage discrimination and in other ways promote equal rights and opportunities for all colleagues.

Employee surveys are to be conducted continuously, with the aim of following up on the working environment.

**Leadership and collegiality**

Professional leadership and an active collegiality are to characterize the University as a workplace.

High demands are placed on leaders of today. The group of leaders includes not only managers in the line organization but also traditional academic leaders. A manager is not only to be responsible for the everyday running of the work but also for strategic development. It is important to be able to lead in times of change. Those managers who have leadership posts are also responsible for the working environment. The prerequisites needed for professional leadership – and to develop as a leader – are to be supported so that more people are inspired to take a leadership role. Assignments as a leader are to be a merit in the career.

Active collegiality entails that colleagues take responsibility for their work and contribute to the development of the work. Active participation and engagement are important aspects in this connection. This, in turn, presupposes professional leadership with enthusiastic leaders who clearly work using values and goals. Professional leadership also entails that the leader has established a sense of trust with the colleagues, based on mutual respect. Leadership and collegiality exist best therefore where they create the mutually beneficial prerequisites.

**Maintaining and developing competence**

A prerequisite to create excellence in education and research is the ability to attract key competence both nationally and internationally. The demand for competence is changing and the competition concerning the workforce of the future will increase. The possibility for competence development and the acquisition of qualifications are important to ascertain that there is relevant competence in the long term.

Research and research-based education demand a high number of lecturers with doctoral degrees. Strategic collaboration with other universities is to exist to make it possible to qualify as a doctoral supervisor in areas that lack the right to award degrees. Together with PhD lecturers, there will be a need for lecturers with specific competencies, for example vocational competence or competence of teaching within the pre-undergraduate programme. Furthermore, it is extremely important that the University can develop and value competence which is connected to both scientific and pedagogical skills.

Education and research are dependent on management and supporting administration services which are conducted by qualified colleagues. The need for maintaining and developing competence within the support services is therefore to be carefully noted.

Plans for strategic competence development in which the various competence needs (short and long-term) are described are to exist for each subject, department or School and also within the support services. There are to be clear career paths and development possibilities for all colleagues.

The University’s focus on digitalisation for sustainable development is to be included in the work for competency and competence development.
### 5.3 Equality

Active work in equality is important for sustainable development. Equality constitutes one of the UN’s global sustainability goals in Agenda 2030. The Government has given the country’s universities a specific assignment to start plans for the integration of equality.

In the University’s internal work, equality is considered a prerequisite for excellence. Work with equality is to be done systematically and in accordance with international, national and local goals. The work is to be integrated into the courses and programmes, research, and support services, and permeate the work of the whole University.

An inclusive and conscious approach is to characterize the University’s work for equality. An even distribution between women and men is to be the aim within all groups of colleagues, amongst not only teaching and research staff but also amongst the University’s support services. Women and men – students as well as colleagues – are to be able to work for equal conditions and have the same career opportunities at the University. Equality is a prerequisite so that all students and colleagues are to attain their full potential.

An equality perspective must, in a concrete and visible way, be integrated into all processes for leadership and governance. The perspective is to be included in all decision-making processes, at all levels. Gender distribution within the management is also to be equal.

**Equality within courses and programmes**

Equality between women and men is an important quality factor for the studies which are provided at the University. Equality work is complex and demands long-term efforts. Gender-linked perceptions still influence the choice of studies and women and men are given different prerequisites to cope with their studies. Structural obstacles and discouraging attitudes which impede an even recruitment at the University, of both students and colleagues, must be eliminated. The aim is to attain an even distribution between women and men within the various educational environments.

Work is actively to be conducted to integrate an equality perspective in courses and education programmes. At the instigation and implementation of all courses and programmes, an equality perspective that relates in particular to the specific area of knowledge is to be taken into account. A follow-up and evaluation of the integration of the equality perspective is to be conducted continuously, within the framework of the University’s quality assurance system.

**Equality within research**

Equal conditions for women and men within research is a prioritized and challenging goal. The University has, however, as a small and closely-knit university, good possibilities to be effective with the measures which are implemented.

Recruitment goals need to be put in place for various forms of employment which include research personnel within the various subject areas. The percentage and number of professors who are women is to increase generally, until an even distribution is attained at the university. Within each research area, the distribution by gender among professors is to become more even, with at least one third as the under-represented gender. Furthermore, an equality perspective is to be taken into consideration at the appointment of various research leaders, i.e. leaders from the University’s research areas and for those included in the research groups. Possibilities for support to become qualified, in a non-discriminating way, for a more even distribution by gender within the various research environments is to be investigated.

An equality perspective is also to be implemented in the distribution of research funds. Today, women receive research funding to a lesser extent than men, not only in absolute terms but also in relation to the number of women and men among research personnel[10]. Analyses of the distribution are to be conducted, not only in terms of the result but also what caused the outcome; measures are to be taken afterwards.

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10) Statskontoret [The Swedish Agency for Public Management], 2014: Forskningslagen ur ett jämställdhetsperspektiv [Research app]
5.4 QUALITY ASSURANCE

The purpose of quality assurance is to safeguard and improve the quality of work at the University. Well-developed quality assurance is a prerequisite to attain the University's goals for excellence.

The University which is an academic environment – where education, research and support services are included – is the basis for quality assurance work. The work is to include everything at the University and it is to be both evaluative and developmental. It is to contribute to maintaining and developing a reflective culture of quality in our work. This quality culture that is based on trust and confidence is to permeate the whole academic environment. Colleagues and students are, depending on their respective roles, actively and systematically to contribute to safeguarding and enhancing the quality of work.

The principle of continuous improvement is the basis for quality work. This entails that a systematic follow-up, reflection and continuous improvement of the University's work – including the quality assurance system – are part of our day-to-day work. Important aspects of quality assurance include the long-term perspective, proactivity, transparency, participation and responsibility.

The result of quality assurance can entail development or phasing out of work. It can also entail leaving the work without any action taken. Leaving work without any action taken is also a deliberate choice.

Quality assurance is to be efficient in terms of resources. It is, consequently, dependent on suitable work procedures and a developed system of support in which quality-safeguarded data are the foundation. A prerequisite is also that courses and programmes, research, and support services are organized to the best possible extent, so that they simplify the quality work. A standardization of the work process can contribute to this.

In the quality work that is conducted, the University is to monitor how the work is perceived by external actors. There is a need for good market research to be conducted in which comparisons are made with other enterprises, primarily other universities and government agencies.

Quality assurance within courses and programmes

Quality assurance within courses and programmes includes all studies given by the University, i.e. studies at basic university level, advanced level and doctoral level and also contract education. The University's quality assurance system for courses and programmes is to support the whole educational process by identifying responsibility and by making visible rules and expected activities for the parties concerned and for the work within the University. The students' rights to have an influence on their education and their own situation is to be safeguarded and followed up continuously. The quality assurance system for courses and programmes is to have a clear relation to its equivalent for research.

Quality assurance within research

A University-wide, systematic quality work within research is to safeguard the quality of the research and its contribution to research-based education. The University's quality assurance system for research is to have a clear relation to its equivalent for courses and programmes. The INFINIT research environment, which is supported by the KK-Foundation, is a model and driving force for quality assurance of the University's entire research.

5.5 INTERNATIONALIZATION

Internationalization within education and research is to contribute to a fair and sustainable global development of society and also strengthen Sweden's competitiveness and development. Work with internationalization is to be conducted through broad collaboration between Swedish and foreign universities, primarily through student and personnel exchanges and research collaboration.

At the University of Skövde, internationalization is seen as something which contributes to excellence. Internationalization strengthens our work and it prepares students for a world which is becoming increasingly international. As the University works closely to-
gether with external actors, local businesses, the public sector and society at large are also strengthened by internationalization work. An international perspective, i.e. to have an understanding of other countries and for international conditions, creates value and usefulness both locally, regionally and globally.

The University as a place of work and the University campus are to have an international and multicultural hallmark. International exchanges for researchers, teachers and support services personnel are to be encouraged and considered a merit in a continued career path. We must make use of experience of intercultural competence and an international perspective is to be encouraged. Measures which increase integration between Swedish and foreign students and colleagues are important in this connection.

**Internationalization within courses and programmes**

The University's education is to give students good preconditions to develop the ability to see themselves and the knowledge they have acquired in an international perspective. The students are to be trained in making international comparisons and reflections. This can be done in different ways – through the content of courses, exchange studies, courses or parts of courses which are done abroad [for example, placement] or international activities at home. The students who graduate from the University are to be given insight into the global events which influence their chosen area of education. Students within all programmes at basic university levels which comprise 180 higher education credits are to be given the possibility to study abroad. This presupposes that there are collaborative agreements with universities which have studies that relate to the University's chosen educational environments.

Internationalization enhances the quality of the education, amongst other things, by the new perspectives and knowledge that the incoming students contribute with. Foreign students are to be motivated to apply to the University of Skövde by an attractive and well-constructed selection of courses and study programmes in English.

The University can, within the framework of various educational collaborations with foreign universities, work towards subject-area development and coordination internationally.

**Internationalization within research**

Research is mainly conducted through international collaboration and our mutual interests act as an incentive. The development of new knowledge occurs in the interaction between different actors within the confines of the international research community. Even if research has an inherent international dimension, there are ambitions and challenges when it comes to the internationalization of research.

To develop and enhance the University's research, active and goal-oriented international work is needed. The research which is conducted is to make a fundamental contribution to the international research community and global societal development. Collaboration which develops between individual researchers and research groups is the basis for internationalization. The result, in the form of international collaborative publications, i.e. publications with co-authors from a foreign university, is to be encouraged.

International research collaboration is to be used to develop collaboration within education. Consequently, each research environment is to work actively to create and develop opportunities for internationalization within the related courses and programmes, for example, in the form of student and staff exchanges.

**5.6 COLLABORATION, INNOVATION AND VISIBILITY**

The University of Skövde is to be an obvious knowledge node within its academic profile areas. This includes locally, regionally and globally. The University is to take an active role in regional development where the University is a leading and positive force. Many societal challenges encompass both regional and national borders which entails that collaboration must occur with many actors both nationally and internationally. Creating visibility in society is an important part of our collaboration work.
Collaboration platforms
Collaboration platforms are arenas for dialogue and collaboration between the academy and the labour market. Through the platforms, research questions can be identified and concretized. External actors can be included in research, for example, through co-production and contract research. The possibilities to utilize research results is strengthened via the collaboration which can occur. The University’s theme of digitalisation for sustainable development can, via the platforms, be concretized by the fact that knowledge about digitalized and sustainable solutions is disseminated to companies and organizations. The education on offer, which includes not only direct government-funded education but also contract education, can be adapted according to the needs of the surrounding society. The structure of the platforms is to be clear and enhance communication and contact between representatives for the labour market and the teachers and researchers of the University. Global actors can be included but the point of departure for the platforms should be regional actors’ needs and expectations. In this way, the University’s work is grounded in the immediate area.

Strategic collaborative platforms contribute to a long-term and systematic development of the University’s education and research – and the working community in the surrounding area. Each educational and research environment is to constitute a driving force for at least one viable collaborative platform.

Labour market links
The University’s educational programmes are to be developed and conducted with systematic participation by external actors. Through the students’ continual interaction with other societal actors during their studies, they will learn different perspectives and broaden their competence. The interaction is to entail a concrete labour market link, an exchange with working life.

Working life experience can have various forms, for example, formalized study visits, external teachers, guest teachers and mentors. The educational programmes can also include placements connected to an active external partner, such as degree projects or other projects with an active external deputy supervisor, placement studies or placement with an external partner.

Labour market links which take place continuously during an educational programme can contribute to increased academic completion. Students can be more motivated to complete a programme they have started by seeing their future professional roles or by gaining insight into the various possibilities which exist of getting a job after completion of the studies. Labour market links can also be a way to getting a first job after graduation thereby assisting the students’ on the labour market. The University is to work toward students being able to meet regional actors during their studies, which can contribute to competence assurance in the surrounding area.

Students in all programmes at the University of Skövde are to be given the opportunity to continuously having some kind of exchange with the labour market. Mentor programmes and other forms of career support are an important part of labour market links.

Utilization and innovation
The University is to contribute to research-based knowledge being put to use in society, both regionally and nationally as well as globally. The way in which research results can be made useful varies. Common forms include publication, research-based education, research collaboration and knowledge dissemination with external actors but also product and process development. The results of this utilization can constitute innovations of various types, for example, new laws or policies or standards, new methods, new ways of working in the public sector or companies, new materials, positions or products or new behavior in people.

To be able to contribute with solutions to society’s challenges, an open and inclusive approach to usability of research results is needed. The University is to develop strategies, working methods, infrastructure and support services to be able to contribute to usability to a greater extent. Collaboration platforms constitute an important part of the infrastructure for this. Usability is to contribute to development within various sectors of society. All environments are to be offered specific, tailor-made advice for innovation.
The students are to be prepared for and given the opportunity to participate in innovation development in the form of product and service development. Entrepreneur education, in the form of specific programmes and courses geared toward business development and entrepreneurship are to be included in what the University offers in terms of education and studies. The entrepreneurs that graduate will be the agents of innovation from the academy to the public and private sectors.

Visibility in society
The University is to be visible in the surrounding society. The prerequisites for a positive and sustainable visibility are that the work is of very high quality. The University must also, as a learning environment and workplace, be seen as attractive. The trade mark is built up from within. The core of the vision – academic profiling, excellence and care for students, staff and society – is what develops very high quality and attractiveness.

To be able to reach out to society, well-developed and goal-oriented structures for collaboration and external communication need to be in place. The structures will contribute to the creation of visibility and confidence for the University's education and research, regionally, nationally and internationally. The University is to be an active partner in society and be visible in arenas where target groups exist. Visibility is to be high in the surrounding region but also at national level. The University is to be known by politicians and lobbyists.

External funding of education and research
The development of the University's work with collaboration, innovation and visibility contributes to an increased opportunity for external funding. Through collaboration, grants, and donations, the University's long-term financing can be strengthened. In this way, the development of both education and research can benefit greatly. Structured, long-term work to increase external funding from both the private and public sectors is, therefore, to be pursued.

5.7 INDICATORS FOR THE UNIVERSITY IN THE YEAR 2022

- The University's employees are very satisfied with their working environment. The co-worker index (or equivalent) in the co-worker investigations which are conducted for all colleagues is at least 80% (comparative data for 2016: 68%) and for management at least 85% (comparative data for 2016: 78%).
- The proportion of professors among teaching staff is at least 20% (comparative data for December 2016: 11%). The proportion of teaching staff with a PhD is at least 75% (comparative data for December 2016: 69%).
- At least 45% of the University's professors are women (comparative data for 2016: 34%). Within each research area, at least one third of the professors are women and at least one third are men.
- At least 40% of the students within the educational area of technology are women (comparative data for 2016: 29%), at least 20% of the students within the educational area of medicine and nursing are men (comparative data for 2016: 10%) and at least 35% of the students within the educational area of social sciences and law are men (comparative data for 2016: 27%).
- Of the students who have graduated from the University, at least 15% have studied or had placements abroad during part of their studies (comparative data from the group that graduated in 2016: 4%).
- The proportion of publications which constitute international co-publications is at least 40% (comparative data for 2016: 35%).