

INDEPENDENT THINKING FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORLD

STRATEGY DOCUMENT 2022–2026



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, ECONOMICS AND LAW

Introduction

This document presents the main strategies for the development of the School of Business, Economics and Law at the University of Gothenburg (the School) for the period 2022–2026. It outlines further steps in the School’s development, expressing continuity as well as increased ambitions, and taking into account fundamental changes in the societal and global contexts within which we operate. The objective of the strategy is to guide the School further along a number of clear development paths:

- Continuous development of high quality and relevance in research and education, thereby contributing to the attainment of ecological, social and economic sustainability
- A closer link between research and education
- An increasingly structured and entrenched internationalisation of the School’s activities.
- Active engagement in contemporary societal development.

The School’s strategy is in full concordance with the University of Gothenburg’s strategy, Vision 2030, and thus constitutes a means for the School to contribute to the University’s mission and vision.

Formulated in a rather general manner, this document outlines the School’s priorities and targeted areas in which we will be active during the next five years. Thus, this strategy should be operationalised by strategic plans for each individual department as well as annual action plans at the School level.

This document has been discussed and developed in the following settings:

- The Faculty Board
- The Heads of Departments and Special Units.
- Circulation for consideration by the Departments, Special Units and the Student Association
- Preparatory committees at faculty level
- The Corporate Advisory Board
- The International Academic Advisory Council
- The University of Gothenburg’s management team

The strategy has been revised under the extraordinary conditions resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. These conditions constitute a fundamental deviation from what has been perceived as normality.

However, the effects of Covid-19 on overall societal development, and the experiences gained by the School during the pandemic, will undoubtedly have important but uncertain effects on the School's operations in a post-pandemic context.

The strategy document is structured in three sections:

Section A presents and elaborates on the School's mission and vision statements. Section B sets out the strategic objectives for our core activities of research and education. The last section, Section C, defines the strategic objectives for the contextual support that is necessary in order to attain the aims of our core activities.

A set of key performance indicators and targets is linked to the strategy, and is used systematically to follow up on our development at both School and department levels. The qualitative objectives that are expressed in the strategy will be followed up in the recurrent dialogue between the School management and the departments and units.

The strategy document was approved (in its English version) by the Faculty Board of the School of Business, Economics and Law on 8 December 2021.

SECTION

A

OUR MISSION AND VISION

A1. Our mission

The mission of the School is:

**To develop knowledge, educate, and foster independent thinking
for a sustainable world**

In order to be meaningful for the School's future development, the content of the various elements of the mission must be elaborated on: Developing knowledge, and forwarding knowledge through education, is the essence of an academic institution. In this respect, our mission statement implies the paramount importance of a close relationship between research and education. We see this relationship as a prerequisite for attaining excellence in both of these two core activities.

The mission underlines the School's commitment to the highest academic integrity and to fostering the academic ideal of independent, critical and innovative thinking. Given contemporary societal developments, where the demarcation line between statements of facts and opinions is increasingly blurred, stressing these academic ideals has become increasingly important. In education, the School shall give its students the intellectual tools necessary to challenge prevailing notions and the building blocks that enable students to seek new knowledge. After graduation, many of the School's students will take up professional roles where they will have the power to take decisions that affect others and the development of society. This underlines the School's responsibility to give our students an understanding of ethics, and that power always should imply responsibility – not only for individuals' well-being, but also for the organisations in which they are active and for society as a whole.

Informed by the United Nations Agenda 2030, the School shall be at the international forefront of providing high-quality research and education, resulting in knowledge and competence that can contribute to policymaking and assist businesses in their handling of fundamental societal challenges. Accordingly, sustainability is integrated into all operations at the School.

The School shall act on challenges facing the world today, such as climate change, the decline of biodiversity, migratory flows, social exclusion, the effects of demographic changes, the vulnerability of political and financial systems, the erosion of multilateral structures for international cooperation, the distribution and redistribution of resources, or transformative structural changes resulting from technological developments. In both research and education, these

societal challenges should be approached with the most appropriate academic tools available, and often involve cross-disciplinary collaboration. Thus, we consider it to be an important asset that our School includes a broad set of academic disciplines, and that we are part of a comprehensive university.

As an integrated but independent part of society, the School shall respond to the contemporary demand for knowledge and competence within its fields of expertise, in order to make an impact and thus contribute to the sustainable advancement of society as a whole. This presupposes active engagement in societal development and close collaboration with private, public and voluntary organisations outside academia.

Fulfilling our mission requires that all our activities are continuously developed and improved in order to meet the highest international academic standards. Our success as an academic institution largely relies on our ability to attract the most competent staff and students in an international context. The School shall therefore develop and sustain an open, responsible, multifaceted and thereby attractive academic environment at our campus in Gothenburg. International exchanges and collaboration shall be a normal condition for the School's faculty members. Research primarily takes place in international contexts and is published in international journals, and research communities are increasingly international. Transboundary student recruitment, student exchanges and educational collaboration are essential prerequisites for high quality and relevance in education. Active participation in international collaborative networks is therefore fundamental for the fulfilment of the School's mission and vision.

A.2 Our vision

The vision of the School of Business, Economics and Law is:

To be an excellent and progressive academic institution in a global context.

This vision focuses on our continuous endeavour for academic excellence and societal relevance. It reconfirms that we are part of a global academic community, and that it is in this context that we should be assessed, by ourselves and by others. Fulfilling our mission is how we work to attain this vision.



SECTION

B

THE CORE:
RESEARCH AND
EDUCATION

B1. Research

Our mission includes the development of new knowledge for a sustainable world. In order to be an excellent institution internationally, it is central that research at the School is characterised by high quality and has a strong impact on the research community, on policy, and on society as a whole. As an integrated part of our research activities, we offer PhD programmes in all our major disciplines with the aim of contributing to the Swedish and international pools of PhDs in academia, as well as in the public and private sectors.

A strong research environment

A strong research environment is an important facilitator of high-quality knowledge development and independent thinking. It is our view that such an environment should be characterised by:

- being driven by curiosity and having a cooperative environment among faculty,
- being constructively critical, so that ideas, methodologies and propositions are systematically questioned and criticised based on scientific arguments,
- taking significant responsibility within the academic community with respect to organising research conferences, important tasks such as editorship, serving on editorial and research boards, and carrying out evaluations and referee assignments,
- research which is conducted with integrity and in line with high ethical standards,
- encouraging interdisciplinary research when appropriate,
- having a steady flow of prominent visiting researchers and a significant number of PhD students and faculty hired internationally,
- always striving for the highest possible quality, and
- reciprocal interactions with stakeholders outside academia.

Promoting high-quality research

In order to further increase our impact on society and our production of influential, high-quality research, the main strategy is to support the decentralised, organic growth of different fields of research. Notably, high-quality research refers to disciplinary depth as well as cross-disciplinary collaboration, since both are needed to address today's complex societal and environmental challenges. Thus, we shall provide structures and incentives that particularly encourage and support strong research environments to reach the highest international standard. The individual departments and units have the main responsibility

for achieving this, for example through strategic decisions regarding recruitment and policies.

The School's management shall support these ambitions in close dialogue with the departments, by providing arenas for sharing ideas between the departments, by providing detailed bibliometric support concerning developments over time, by providing such information for competing schools to facilitate effective benchmarking, and by encouraging and supporting corresponding comparisons at department level. The School's management shall also support, and work together with, the departments in order to increase the level of external research funding.

Research cooperation with internationally leading researchers shall be supported at both department and faculty levels. The School shall moreover work actively to receive sufficient funding to establish and maintain a programme for excellent visiting junior scholars.

Complete academic environments

The School shall promote the formation and maintenance of complete academic environments for research and education, and shall promote all teaching at the School being founded on research. These environments shall contribute to cross-boundary research and education collaboration, and shall be characterised by cooperation with both public and private actors from across society. Our goal is that all teaching staff should have the ability to understand and discuss leading new research of relevance for each course, including research outside their own field. It is also important that all researchers are involved in teaching. It is essential to have a good mix of basic research, including the development of theory and research methods, and more applied research where theory and research methods are used in empirical studies. In order to attain these goals, the recruitment and promotion policies at the School's departments are of critical importance. The School's management shall support and review the development of these policies in close dialogue with the departments.

Relevance to surrounding society

Close relationships with surrounding society are important, since they further the quality and relevance of the research produced. In addition, they help to increase the societal value and impact of research. Just as the School aims for increased research quality, it also aims for improved societal impact, of which effective research communication

is an important element. The latter can take several forms, including the production of popular science articles, summarising important development in research fields for a broader audience within the media and professional organisations, giving public lectures, advising and engaging in close dialogue with private and public organisations, and contributing in various ways to public inquiries and policy development. It can also take the form of co-creating knowledge with external individuals and organisations.

Close relationships with surrounding society are important for all the School's departments and units, and its Partnership Programme and multidisciplinary research centres should continue to play a key role in relation to our ambition of maintaining and developing these relationships. Another important role of these research centres is to produce challenge-driven multidisciplinary research of high quality and relevance, and thus deal constructively with current issues for individuals, private and public organisations, and society in general. The research centres are highly flexible and temporary structures without any employed staff. They will continue to be encouraged and supported by the School, as long as they fulfil their mission and provide sufficient added value given their costs and staff resources. In order to ensure this, they shall undergo external evaluation at regular intervals, and shall be closed when their existence can no longer be justified in terms of their added value.

Research priorities

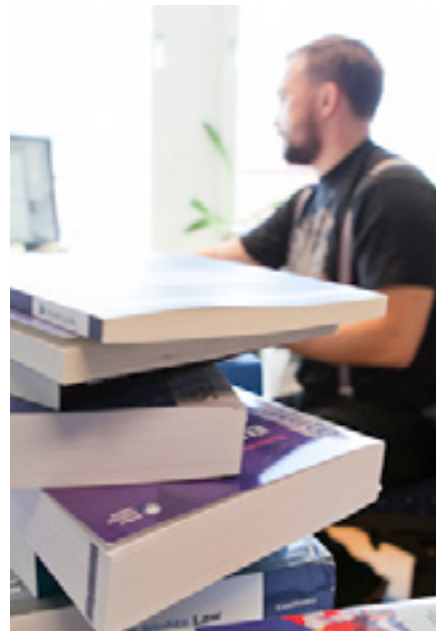
Research priorities shall continue to be based primarily on decentralised processes in which individual researchers or research teams decide on research topics. In line with this strategy, the majority of research funding from the School will continue to be distributed directly to the departments. No later than summer 2022, the School shall complete a review and a potential revision of the existing model for the inter-departmental allocation of research funding at the School.

Where the School prioritises research topics, the focus shall be on research that, in addition to being of high quality, also relates to sustainable development as specified in Agenda 2030, or to other research areas of high societal relevance. Such priorities by the School's management refer primarily to support for new research centres and co-funding of larger research initiatives. The School should also work to maintain an up-to-date research infrastructure that facilitate research at the forefront of societal developments.



Research funding

In order to ensure an internationally competitive research environment, it is essential that the School's proportion of external funding increases over time. The School's faculty members should aim to obtain the most prestigious and competitive research grants at Swedish and international levels. Particular priority should be given to applications for ERC Starting, Consolidator or Advanced Grants which, if successful, will be supported financially at School level. In Sweden, priority should be given to obtaining grants from the most competitive research funds such as the Swedish Research Council, Riksbankens Jubileumsfond, Vinnova, Formas, Forte, Mistra and KAW. In addition to alleviating departments' budgetary burdens, such funding is also a strong indicator of high research quality. Other types of external research financing can also provide important additional funding for the School's research. The School shall also strengthen its ambitions in terms of developing more applied research collaborations with external partners within the private and public sectors.



KPIs and targets for research

Key performance indicators (KPIs) should ideally be straightforward to measure, and they should also give reasonably good indications of whether we are improving over time in strategically important dimensions. At the same time, we have to remember that they do not measure everything of importance.

In terms of publications, the School collects information based on the Norwegian list as well as the British ABS system. In order to measure research productivity, we also include indicators of publications per full-time equivalent employed faculty member and publications per SEK 1 million in research grants allocated from the School to departments.

In order to assess the academic impact of our research, we supplement publication output measures with citations of the School's output. While all available citation measures have innate problems, the broadest is the Google Scholar measure. A measure of research seminars by external faculty gives an indication of the School's openness to external influences. Assignments as journal editors and editorial board memberships are key academic positions that signal a researcher's standing in the scientific community. Another indicator of successful research is the size of external funding from major Swedish and international funds.

Thus, as KPIs for research quality, the School – together with its departments and units – will continuously measure and annually report:

- The total number of publications of books, book chapters and journal articles at levels 2 and 1 of the Norwegian list.
- Publications of journal articles at levels 3, 4 and 4* of the British ABS system at those departments where this measure is relevant and meaningful.
- Publications of books, book chapters and journal articles at levels 2 and 1 of the Norwegian list per full-time equivalent employed faculty member and per SEK 1 million in research grants from the School.
- Research publications related to the sustainable development goals.
- Google scholar citations of senior faculty (at docent and professor levels).
- Research seminar presentations at the School by external faculty members.
- Assignments as editors or editorial board members for international journals at levels 2 and 1 of the Norwegian list and in key Swedish journals in fields where this is relevant.
- External research funding from major international and Swedish research funds, and the proportion of such funding obtained in collaboration with external partners.
- The total number of active PhD students per SEK 1 million in research grants from the School.

In line with the overall goal of further increasing research quality over time, the ambition is that the KPIs – which will be monitored closely – shall increase over time.

In addition to these measurable KPIs, the School is also committed to developing templates for assessing the relevance of research activities to – and collaboration with – external key stakeholders. A special effort will be made to document cases of particular societal impact from research at the School.

B2. Education and teaching

In line with our mission and vision – Independent Thinking for a Sustainable World – our education shall be of a high quality, integrated with research, directed to be relevant in relation to our students and their future employers.

The strategy for education and teaching is summarised in two main priorities: high quality and high societal relevance. These two priorities are explained in further detail below.

High-quality education – fostering independent thinking

High-quality education fostering independent thinking emphasises the integration between research and education. Integrating research and education does not only mean transferring scientific knowledge to students. Education should also be designed as a research process, encouraging curiosity and the desire to understand and explore societal developments. Integrating education and research also implies that educational programmes should contain the building blocks that enable students to seek new knowledge and to develop critical and independent thinking. Teaching methods should foster not only the skills and abilities related to mastering scientific methodologies, but also the development of analytical skills, the ability to turn around perspectives, the ability to question assumptions that are taken for granted and the ability to form judgements on complex phenomena. Teaching should be characterised by joint learning and exploration, where the focus is on developing independent thinking and teaching staff and students develop new knowledge together, close to or at the research frontier. Ultimately, it is when students have developed new knowledge characterised by independent critical thinking that we have achieved our mission.

Qualified teaching staff

A fundamental requirement for high-quality education is the scientific qualification of teaching staff. Our ambition is that all teaching staff should be active researchers, and that career structures should facilitate faculty members' career development in both education and research. High-quality teaching should be recognised in promotion policies. In this way, research is integrated into education.

Another way to integrate research and education is to ensure that education content reflects the international research frontier. Educational content should be continuously updated in relation to scientific developments within the respective discipline. Teaching staff

should also have knowledge about current developments within their research discipline and be able to convey this knowledge, even if they are not active researchers within the field in which they teach.

Research and education can also be integrated through teaching staff being actively engaged in research within the field in which the education takes place. In this way, teaching staff can contribute their own written materials and/or examples or data that not only show the relevance of the research, but also ensure that the education is at the forefront of the subject area.

However, integrating research and education is not only about ensuring the scientific content of education. It also means that education should resemble research to a greater extent in terms of its process, driving forces and ambition, i.e. to develop new knowledge. In this way, researchers can see more benefits in their role as educators and can see more benefits in engaging in research.

To facilitate the integration of research and education, faculty members' work load allocation should feature a reasonable balance between teaching and research activities.

Qualified students

High performing students are another attribute of high-quality education. High grades in previous studies are a good predictor – but not the only predictor – of student performance. We will continue to monitor the quality of admitted students at bachelor's level and increase the quality of students at master's level. Within the framework of a meritocratic admission process, we will continue to act to increase the number of competitive applicants from a broader spectrum in terms of social background, ethnicity, etc., with the aim of increasing student diversity. We believe that a breadth of perspectives, experiences and knowledge provides the right conditions for better education and a deeper understanding of society. To increase the number of high performing applicants, admission will be open to international students to a greater extent. This means that a larger proportion of programmes and courses will be offered in English.

Entry requirements should be high and admission processes should be transparent, competitive and meritocratic. We strive to attract students who have an interest and the ability to complete university studies within the allotted timeframes.



The learning experience provided on all the School's programmes shall offer students the skills, knowledge and integrity needed to be able to perform with distinction in an ever-changing society. Progression and a vibrant learning environment are key. Programmes should be designed to ensure student learning step by step. Course learning outcomes should contribute to the fulfilment of programme level learning outcomes. The objective is that the majority of students shall graduate within the allotted timeframe.

The performance of graduating students is assessed through learning goal fulfilment at programme or degree level. Learning objective fulfilment is measured continuously, allowing us to identify where learning objectives are not achieved and to amend course content or teaching methods to achieve learning objectives better.

The quality of education is enhanced by student involvement and participation, providing the feedback loops necessary for teaching quality advancement. Students are encouraged to participate actively in course and programme evaluations, and the Students' Union is represented in decision-making bodies at all levels, ensuring that student voices and perspectives are heard and acknowledged in the quality assurance process.

Relevant education for a sustainable world

The second priority of our strategy is educating for a sustainable world. The general aim of any higher education institution is to develop knowledge for the benefit of society, as well as relevant skills for students' future employers and attractive career opportunities. Education should evolve in line with societal developments and changing demands from employers, students and other stakeholders. This places high demands on universities in terms of effective dialogue and collaboration with surrounding society, and education programmes being adapted to address the challenges that arise within businesses and societies.

Not only should higher education institutions adapt to changing societal needs, they should also contribute to change in the sense that they enable societies and businesses to deal with changing conditions. The role of academia is most evident when faced with societal crises and dramatic events. When societies change, critical and independent thinking has an important role to play, offering perspectives beyond what is immediately urgent and imminent. Critical, independent and



ethical thinking involves considering alternative realities and being able to draw conclusions and identify the consequences of actions for different stakeholders. In a media landscape where fact becomes fiction and fiction becomes fact, critical thinking and an understanding of how knowledge of the world in which we live is created is even more important.

Critical, independent and ethical thinking is also crucial for the development of innovative solutions to major societal challenges. This means that not only should our programmes encourage students to understand how challenges to global sustainability – such as climate change, social injustice and technological developments – affect economies, societies and businesses, they should also give students the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and integrity necessary in their future professional roles to lead the way towards a more sustainable world.

Whether our students become lawyers, managers, analysts, civil servants, accountants, financial brokers or entrepreneurs, they need to be able to question taken-for-granted assumptions, critically analyse what has been done in the past, and formulate new strategies and responsible actions for the future. Fostering critical, independent and ethical thinking is therefore a cornerstone of our programme portfolio. By offering students a variety of courses from our key subdisciplines, contrasting perspectives are placed against each other, providing an opportunity for students to develop their own integrated and independent understanding for the benefit of their future careers as experts, managers or entrepreneurs. This also means that education has more of a research or laboratory setting, based on interaction between different actors, ideas and perspectives. Global societal challenges are brought into the learning environment and students create new knowledge to apply in their future professional careers. Thus, in order to achieve our mission to contribute to a sustainable world, there needs to be a constant process of ensuring the relevance of education in relation to society at large and our students' future employers.

Relevant to society and employers

A basic requirement is that education should provide knowledge and competences that are relevant to long-term societal needs. Educational programmes at the School target specific professional careers, such as law, accountancy, planning and financial analysis. However, these programmes are also based on intellectual traditions offering students a broad understanding of societies, economies and business conditions relevant for large parts of society, serving a broad range of societal functions and roles around the world. This means that students who complete our programmes have a wide range of career options, regardless of their professional specialisation. To some extent, it is the quality of education and the university that makes our students attractive to employers, rather than their specific educational profile. Offering broad, high-quality programmes with multiple possibilities for specialisation is therefore a way to ensure long-term relevance for society and our students' future employers.

Internationalisation is a central element of relevant education. For a small nation with an open economy such as Sweden, the ability to act in global markets is essential in order to maintain competitiveness and to develop societal welfare. Our stakeholders – who are prospective employers for our students – are expanding their activities around the world. An increasing number of organisations use English as their corporate language. Globalisation also implies new sustainability challenges. To maintain relevance, it is therefore important to develop our education in a global perspective and in ways that give students practical experience and competences in collaborating internationally.

As part of our ambition to contribute to personal and societal development, opportunities for lifelong learning are central. The School therefore offers single-subject courses, customised programmes for professionals, and an Executive MBA programme. Public seminars and research centres also serve this purpose.

To further strengthen societal relevance, all programmes should be consistently updated within structured dialogue with external partners, for example through advisory boards. This is important to ensure that programme content reflects developments in society and business practice.

Relevance can also be ensured through teaching staff being actively involved in or having experience of the professional practice related to

educational content. Relevant experience may also be brought into the classroom through case studies, group exercises or other pedagogical devices, developing the skills, competences and values expected for students' future careers. The relevance of education also benefits from faculty members' interaction with external stakeholders. This interaction may offer an opportunity to form an idea of the types of skills and abilities expected from our students in their future careers. More specifically, it can provide insights into the types of problems that students' future employers are faced with, which can provide clues for the design of educational content, courses and themes for student assignments. Faculty members' engagement in policy matters, business practice and social developments should therefore be promoted.

Educational relevance may be further enhanced by inviting professionals, policymakers, managers or other practitioners as guests in our learning environments. This should include an appropriate balance between the private and public sectors.

Another way to enhance relevance is to offer students internships, work placements or practice-based courses, where students can combine studies with practical work at businesses or public sector organisations.

Engagement with practice should not, however, exclude or be a substitute for theoretical content or an emphasis on scientific methods. Engagement with practice is an important tool for developing students' understanding of theoretical studies and the application of scientific methods. The ability to link theoretical content with practice should be emphasised. All programmes should provide a reasonable balance between scientific and practice-oriented content.

Attractive for students

If education programmes are relevant for employers and in view of societal challenges, students will have greater employment opportunities after completing their studies. If education programmes are relevant for society and employers, they are also attractive to students. However, student preferences also change. It is important for any higher education institution to ensure relevance in line with changing student preferences in terms of educational content, form and delivery modes, including physical and digital infrastructures. The School should therefore offer an attractive learning environment with a wide range of educational programmes, opportunities for international exchanges and a variety of delivery modes, with the ambition of strengthening students' lifelong learning and future career development.

When it comes to the construction of new facilities, we will systematically assess physical needs relating to the development of teaching methods and modes for increased interactivity in the learning process. The potential for a new learning environment offered by future facilities brings added opportunities for pedagogical development.

International exchanges are increasingly seen as a central part of the student experience. As well as involving curriculum content and preparing for future careers, international exchanges are also part of what it means to be a student, to understand global developments and to be a part of a global society. To meet students' expectations, the School therefore needs to continue to develop an international learning environment, providing opportunities for student exchanges and interaction at all levels.

The increasing number of international students means that our programmes and facilities need to be relevant and competitive from an international perspective. International accreditations are an important quality indicator for students when deciding which school to apply to, and should therefore continue.

An attractive learning environment is also sustainable. All students have the right to be treated equally and fairly, and without discrimination. Attractiveness thus requires that students encounter an open and tolerant learning environment, not only in the interaction with faculty members but also in the interaction between students.

Key priorities:

- Faculty members' working hours should feature a reasonable balance between teaching and research activities.
- To ensure long-term relevance for society and our students' future employers, the School should offer broad, high-quality programmes with multiple opportunities for specialisation and international exchanges.
- All programmes should have advisory boards.
- Course and programme content should be continuously updated and aligned with societal and business developments, providing a variety of delivery modes with the ambition to strengthen students' lifelong learning and future career development.
- Mission-related competences related to independent thinking and sustainability should be given high priority in quality assurance processes.



- Faculty members' engagement in policy and practice should be promoted.
- Professionals, policymakers, managers and practitioners should be invited at all educational levels.
- Strengthened ambitions to develop competitive physical and digital learning environments from an international perspective.

In order to support high quality and relevance in education, the following KPIs will be followed up in annual assessments and targets specified in action plans:

- First choice applicants per position offered
- Admission grades: bachelor's level
- Proportion of international students on English-speaking programmes
- Proportion of teaching faculty members qualified as scholarly academics
- Proportion of students completing their studies on time
- Graduating students with programme-relevant employment within six months of graduation

SECTION

C

PRECONDITIONS FOR
HIGH QUALITY AND
RELEVANCE IN RESEARCH
AND EDUCATION

C1. Sustainability in our operations

The School's explicit ambition is to be at the international forefront among similar institutions when it comes to sustainability in all dimensions of our work. Likewise, the aim is to be a driving force for development of sustainability strategies and measures at the University of Gothenburg. The School shall actively implement its international commitments under the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME), and shall make these concrete in its operations. In order to learn from and contribute to joint efforts when it comes to advancing the sustainability agendas among business schools, the School shall be an active partner in the Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative (GRLI) and the Global Business School Network (GBSN). In order to support and enhance the contributions to a sustainable future in all our operations, the School shall maintain an action plan for sustainability, including roles and responsibilities. The action plan shall be updated on an annual basis, following the development of knowledge and best practices in this evolving field. Internal communication and dialogue are crucial in order to ensure shared ownership of the School's sustainability work among all employees, and will be an important aspect of the action plan. Likewise, external communication will also be given particular attention to ensure that the School's sustainability profile is well known, and to attract potential collaborators. While the sustainability dimension is integrated into the strategies for research and education (section B), complementary aspects of vital importance are addressed here.

Sustainability shall characterise all the School's activities. It shall therefore work constantly to reduce the environmental and social footprints of its day-to-day operations. There shall be an environmental policy in place, meeting the ISO 14001 standard and ensuring constant improvement via time-specific targets and annual controls of the School's operations. Furthermore, following the university's climate action plan, the School shall reduce carbon dioxide emissions from its operations by 25% by the end of 2023 and by 50% by the end of 2029, compared to 2019. A strategy for implementing the climate action plan will be developed in 2022.

The School shall ensure that sustainable energy-saving solutions, based on the best available technology, are applied in its building management and energy management. This also applies to the construction of the new building. Furthermore, reconditioning furniture will be prioritised when moving into the new premises. The School strives to increase the number of installations and features that meet the dual objectives

of making a positive environmental impact and highlighting our environmental footprint and our dependence on natural resources. The size of the solar array shall be increased. This will also be taken into account when the inner courtyard is re-designed after the construction work.

In terms of purchasing goods and services and waste management, the School shall work to continuously minimise the environmental impact of both day-to-day work and conferences and other events. The same applies to food and food services. The School shall engage in dialogue with the campus canteen on menus and means of distributing food, following trends and best practices, including knowledge on nudging generated at the School.

The School shall develop means and strategies for reducing the number of business trips by air, mainly by using alternative modes of travel and also by improving the facilities for virtual meetings. With regard to commuting and local travel, the School shall further increase the use of fossil-free travel modes, i.e. public transport, cycling and walking. The new building under construction will include an entrance to an underground train station, thereby enhancing sustainable travel for staff and students.

The School shall ensure that the financial assets of foundations dedicated to supporting the School's operations are managed in an ethical and responsible manner, in congruence with relevant national and international norms and principles such as the UN Principles of Responsible Investments. The School has adopted a specific instruction for implementing these norms and principles, which shall be reviewed annually.

C2. A good work environment

A sustainable, dynamic and stimulating work environment is a precondition for the effective functioning of the School's day-to-day operations and our ability to recruit highly competent academic and administrative staff, as well as talented students. The work environment shall be built on academic freedom, mutual respect, engagement and participation, responsibility, a high degree of collegiality, respect for the individual's integrity and the opportunity for personal development. The work environment includes digital arenas.

The School shall take all measures necessary to maintain and develop its work environment, following Our fundamental values, as adopted by the Faculty Board. We will act to implement the University of Gothenburg's Policy for the work environment and Policy for gender equality and equal treatment effectively within all operations¹.

The School works towards the equal value and treatment of all people. All students and staff members shall feel comfortable and respected, regardless of their age, sex, ethnicity, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, transgender identity or expression, or political opinion. The School shall act promptly to address any incidents relating to the physical or social work environment, and shall continuously take proactive measures to minimise the risk of future incidents. The School shall pay special attention to dealing with the disruptive effects for the work environment caused by the ongoing construction work, as well as optimising physical working conditions in the new and renovated premises that will be completed in 2025.

The School shall pay special attention to improving the psychosocial work environment for all students and PhD students, with the aim that all students should experience a sustainable student life, by getting the best conditions for dealing with the stress and effort that studies at the School entail, as well as the best conditions for contributing to joint efforts for a good work environment at the School.

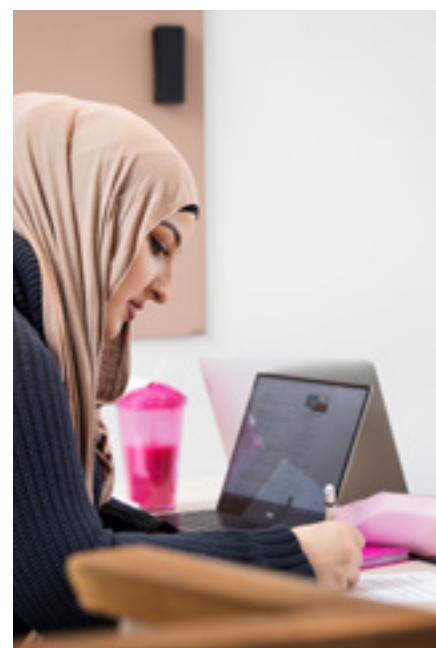
The departments are responsible for promoting the fulfilment of goals for students' psychosocial health in the development of pedagogy and quality within each teaching area.

Our workplace health and safety management focuses on prevention, health promotion and organisational aspects of the work environment. The organisational aspects to be prioritised include active leadership, open and honest communication, efficient management of resources, the assignment of individual responsibilities, and clear and appropriate structures for dealing with conflicts and harassment.

The committees and bodies at faculty level shall promote the work to achieve the aim of a sustainable, dynamic and stimulating work environment. The Preparatory Committee for Education is responsible for promoting the goals for students' psychosocial health within the overall work with quality issues and pedagogical issues in education at first- and second-cycle levels. The Health and Safety Committee

¹www.medarbetarportalen.gu.se/digitalAssets/1760/1760885_gu-2019-3310-arbetsmiljopolicy-for-goteborgs-universitet

www.medarbetarportalen.gu.se/digitalAssets/1773/1773900_policy-jamstalldhet-och-likabehandling-eng



acts as a consultation body between students, staff and the School's management, and deals with possible measures to promote goal fulfilment and problems that make goal fulfilment more difficult, and reports on the state of psychosocial health among students. The work at faculty level is conducted in consultation with the Students' Union.

C3. Recruitment and promotion

High-quality teaching, research and interaction with society are fundamental prerequisites for attaining the School's mission and vision. In order to enhance quality in teaching and research, as well as societal impact, a forward-looking, merit-based recruitment and promotion policy is essential.

Recruitment processes shall be meritocratic, based on a competitive assessment of scientific and pedagogical qualifications. It is of crucial importance that sufficient work is put into finding the most competent group of candidates available worldwide for each open academic position at the School. In order to promote an improved gender balance, active identification of highly competitive candidates of the underrepresented gender is a priority.

Within the meritocratic framework, the School shall act in order to increase the recruitment of faculty members with international backgrounds and experience. In order to enhance the integration of recruited non-national faculty members into the School's operations and society as a whole, courses in Swedish shall be offered.

The School's formalised criteria for recruitment and promotion to academic positions are supplemented by more specific guidelines at each department. These guidelines should have a high degree of clarity, should be communicated effectively and with full transparency, and should promote higher quality research and teaching within each discipline. The specified guidelines shall continuously be effectively benchmarked in relation to our main competitors within each discipline. The School's demands for qualifications should never fall below those of our main competitors.

In close collaboration with the School's Preparatory Committee for Recruitment and Promotion, the departments and units have the main responsibility for recruitment and promotion processes. The School's management shall actively monitor, support and develop these processes in close dialogue with the departments and units.

In order to meet the increasing complexities of academic administration, recruiting administrative staff with high professional competence is of great strategic importance for the development of the School's operations. This is a precondition for maintaining efficient administration that academic staff can rely on with a high degree of confidence. Sufficient resources shall be allocated to ensure open, rigorous and efficient recruitment processes.

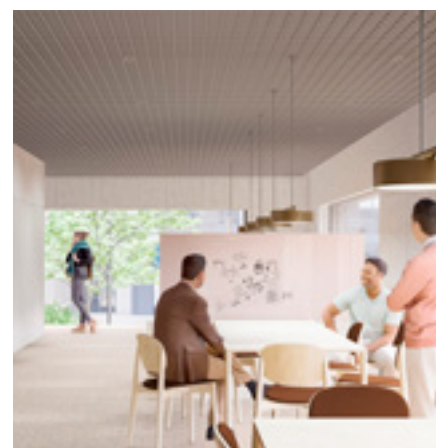
C4. An attractive campus environment

The project to expand the premises at Vasagatan 1 was launched in 2014, and the estimated completion date is 2025. The expansion offers a solution to the current spatial restraints on our development, and makes it possible to locate all the School's operations at one address in the city centre.

The School considers this to be a great opportunity to create an attractive physical learning environment at the international forefront that will support its development over the coming decades. The renewed physical environment will facilitate the application of new pedagogic approaches, using blended learning modes when appropriate. In order to fully utilise the potential of this project, the School shall continue to play an active part in the detailed planning process, engaging all relevant stakeholders.

During the construction period, the School shall continue the process of making appropriate adjustments to existing buildings, with the objective of creating a fully integrated campus structure at Vasagatan 1.

The overall objective is to create a campus that is open to the surrounding community, and is bustling with both curricular and extracurricular activities; an attractive arena for learning, research, culture, debate and social interaction. This will include the subletting of office space to partner organisations, and the commercial use of auditoriums for conferences and events when not being used by the School.



C5. Strengthening relevance and quality through relations with practice, alumni and students.

Close mutual relations and a continuous exchange of ideas with corporate and public partners are pre-conditions for maintaining high relevance in research and education.

The School's Partnership Programme, which has been established and developed over the past 20 years, functions well. Nevertheless, it needs to be continuously developed and coordinated with other collaborative arrangements between the School and external stakeholders. In addition, the School shall develop formats for deeper reciprocal collaboration, including research, with certain strategic partners. The School shall strive to make better use of the partnership network as an arena for continuous discussions concerning the contemporary and shifting demands for knowledge and competence in our society. This is linked to the aim that all bachelor's and master's programmes shall feature a structured partner dialogue.

The Corporate Advisory Council is well established as a central arena for discussions concerning the development of the School. Over the years, its advice has been highly valuable to the School's management. The composition of the council helps strengthen our connections with our corporate partners. It is our expressed ambition that the council's high level of engagement should be sustained and further developed, through both clear agenda setting and continuous membership succession.

The School shall further develop its established good relations with the active and independent Students' Union. The student Union shall be represented in all relevant preparatory committees and decision-making bodies. It is particularly important that the Students' Union is supported and encouraged to continue to take responsibility for participating in quality assurance and developing the School's educational offerings.

Well-developed, close alumni relations are important in order to strengthen the School's brand, expand its partnership platform and support the School's fundraising activities. The structure of our alumni relations has been developed over the last ten years, and we shall continue this process on the basis of mutual benefit. One important element in this development is to strengthen the cooperation between the School's alumni network and the independent alumni association HHGA. The international alumni network shall be strengthened with an increasing number of alumni activities outside Sweden.



C6. Quality assurance and international accreditations

In addition to the continuous internal processes for quality assessment and assurance, the School has been accredited in accordance with EQUIS standards since 2004. It was awarded an AMBA accreditation in 2013, and achieved accreditation according to AACSB standards in 2016. We consider the accreditation procedures to be one of several important means for quality assurance and continuous development through a structured system for international peer review. Moreover, accreditations are important when it comes to creating international academic partnerships with high-quality institutions. One limitation of these accreditations, however, is that they clearly focus on business education and related research. We will continue our policy of sustaining international accreditations according to the EQUIS, AACSB and AMBA standards. Where relevant, we will engage in additional external assessment procedures. In connection with this, particular attention is being paid to the Master of Laws programme. The outcome of these external assessments shall be made public and reported to the faculty board. The board shall adopt specific action plans based on the assessments, thereby giving the external assessments an effect for the School's development.

Benchmarking with peer institutions shall be carried out to further develop the School's quality assurance. In connection with this, the School shall actively engage in relevant international collegiate structures such as ELFA², EFMD³ och AACSB⁴. The School shall also continue to be actively engaged in developing new, relevant formats for review such as the Positive Impact Rating (PIR)⁵.

Since 2014, the School has benefited from having an International Academic Advisory Council that has provided important input for the School's development. It is the School's ambition to further utilise this highly competent multinational body for qualified advice concerning its future development, and to secure a good succession of council members.

² European Law Faculties Association

³ European Foundation for Management Development

⁴ Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business

⁵ www.positiveimpactrating.org



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