POLICY FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE AND CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT OF RESEARCH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

Decision-maker	Vice-chancellor
Overseeing	Grants and Innovation Office
function Decision	16 Mar 2023
date Period of	To be reviewed for relevance/revised in 2025
validity Summary	This policy sets out the principles, processes and steering documents that contribute to the quality assurance and continuous quality improvement of research at the University of Gothenburg.

Principles of Continuous Quality Improvement

These principles are founded on the tradition developed at the university and within the academic community at large.

- Continuous quality improvement is integrated into the university's regular operations.
- So that it can be adapted to each environment, the carrying out of continuous quality improvement is decentralised. Monitoring is carried out by a higher level.
- Research quality is promoted via a variety of initiatives in respect of the planning, implementation and monitoring of research. Collegial and international peer review are fundamental.
- The university's continuous quality improvement involves all the bodies, meeting forums, processes, documents and activities that provide opportunities for developing the quality of research.
- A living quality culture, spreading of good examples and exchanges of findings via various arenas are central.
- Open reporting of continuous quality improvement provides a strong incentive for taking good care that our operations maintain high quality.

Overall processes

1. Local continuous monitoring and quality improvement

Monitoring of continuous quality improvement within research is carried out at the department level. The aim is that research should be given the right conditions for high quality and compliance with legislation and ordinances. Processes for continuous quality improvement are anchored, visible and known.

Departments should especially develop and monitor:
- Recruitment, career paths and career support. This is to be done by always having legally sound and transparent recruitment and promotion processes (thereby supporting research development and renewal).
- External collaboration. This is to be done by: systematically managing and monitoring their initiatives in respect of third stream activities; providing information about their activities; and, promoting the dissemination and useful exploitation of research results.
- Connection between research and education. This is to be done by ensuring that the core operations benefit from each other and contribute constructively to an attractive environment.
- Research ethics and secure handling of research data.

The faculties' overall quality responsibility is formulated in _Rules of Procedure_. These state, amongst other things, that faculty boards decide on: objectives and strategies for research including external collaboration; and, monitoring, quality assurance and development of each faculty's core operations.

2. Recurrent external review

In research, various forms of expert assessment are traditional. They provide continuous and established external review. If necessary, research groups, faculty boards and others can also initiate special external evaluations.

Additionally, the university's quality system includes the RED model (*Research Evaluation Development*) of external review. RED is carried out every eight to ten years. On each occasion, its focus is adapted to best contribute to the quality and development of research. University management, faculty boards and departments are responsible for analysing review results and, as a consequence of the review's conclusions and recommendations: carrying out improvements in operations; and, monitoring the impact of implemented measures.

3. University-wide continuous monitoring and quality improvement

Through various forms of dialogue with the faculties, the vice-Chancellor is to annually monitor the conditions for conducting high-quality research. Central components in this are discussion and monitoring of the faculties': three-year *Objectives and Strategies*; annual *operational plans*; annual monitoring reports; and, plans of measures linked to RED.

As a support for monitoring in respect of the directions set out in the vision, the objectives and the strategies, there are annual-monitoring indicators. These indicators serve as a complement to the qualitative annual monitoring reports (in which initiatives and results are presented).

Led by the university management's representative for research issues, the Research Board is especially charged with monitoring and preparing issues regarding cross-faculty strategic research and research-relevant collaborations. The Research Board: initiates and supports measures aimed at assuring the quality and continuous improvement of the university's research; and, promotes efficient coordination and development of the university's organisation of research infrastructure. The Research Board is to review this policy at least every other year.

The Research Board's committee for ethical issues in research is led by the university management's representative for research. This committee seeks to promote high-level knowledge and awareness of research ethics and the importance of good research practice.

Learning across discipline and organisational boundaries is an important element in the university's continuous quality improvement. This is why university-wide seminars are continuously held for inspiration and exchanges of findings in respect of continuous quality improvement in research.

The university's central steering documents for research quality

The university's steering documents govern the organisation's operations in a university-wide and normative manner. They are decided on by the board or the vice-chancellor. In addition to the steering documents set out below, there are several others that are of great importance for securing and developing research quality, e.g. the *gender equality and equal treatment policy* and the *internationalisation strategy*.[1]

The University of Gothenburg's *Vision 2021 – 2030: A University for the World*

This vision establishes the direction for the development of operations at the University of Gothenburg. Measures for achieving the vision are concretised in the university management's and faculties' three-year objective and strategy documents and annual operational plans.

Rules of Procedure and *Delegation of Authority Policy*

The university's Rules of Procedure and Delegation of Authority Policy set out an organisational allocation of responsibilities that identifies various bodies/agents and their responsibilities. Faculty boards are responsible for monitoring, quality assurance and development of the faculties' core operations and the latter's objectives and strategies.

Appointment procedure for teaching posts (in Swedish)

The university's appointments procedure contains the local regulations supplementing the teacher appointment rules in Sweden's Higher Education Ordinance. The appointments procedure regulates which teaching posts there are at the university and the entry requirements for each such post. The appointments procedure additionally contains procedures for recruitment processes, drafting processes and teacher appointment decisions.

Policies, rules and *administrative procedures for research infrastructure*

These steering documents set out the university's criteria for research infrastructures at university-wide, faculty and department levels. Additionally, the steering documents regulate how research infrastructures are to be designated and evaluated.

Policies, rules and *administrative procedures for centres of expertise and research*

These steering documents set out the university's criteria for university-wide, interdisciplinary centres of expertise and research. Additionally, the steering documents regulate how centres of expertise and research are to be designated and evaluated.

Administrative procedures on suspicion of deviation from good research practice

These administrative procedures regulate how research misconduct and suspicion of deviation from good research practice are to be handled.

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[1] These and other steering documents are published on the steering documents web.