



MID-TERM PROGRESS REPORT
Reykjavik University
2023

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Preface

This Mid-term Progress Report follows an Institution-Wide Review (IWR) of Reykjavik University (RU) carried out in 2018/2019 by the Quality Board for Icelandic Higher Education. Mid-Term Progress Reports are one component of the second cycle of the [Icelandic Quality Enhancement Framework \(QEF2\)](#) established by the Icelandic Government in 2017.

The aim of the Mid-Term Progress Report is to review progress made by Reykjavik University since the IWR and address matters raised in the IWR Report as areas of potential improvement.

In addition, the report will briefly inform about recent developments and progress of the key strategic targets and the execution of the structural changes made around the review.

RU has had a very good experience working with the Quality Board. This is true regarding the IWR and the recommendations therein, the SLRs and the recommendations therein, and now the mid-term review. We reiterate our opinion that the Quality Board's work, thoughtfulness, and focus on quality enhancement has been immensely useful and has strengthened Icelandic universities, including RU.

RU structure

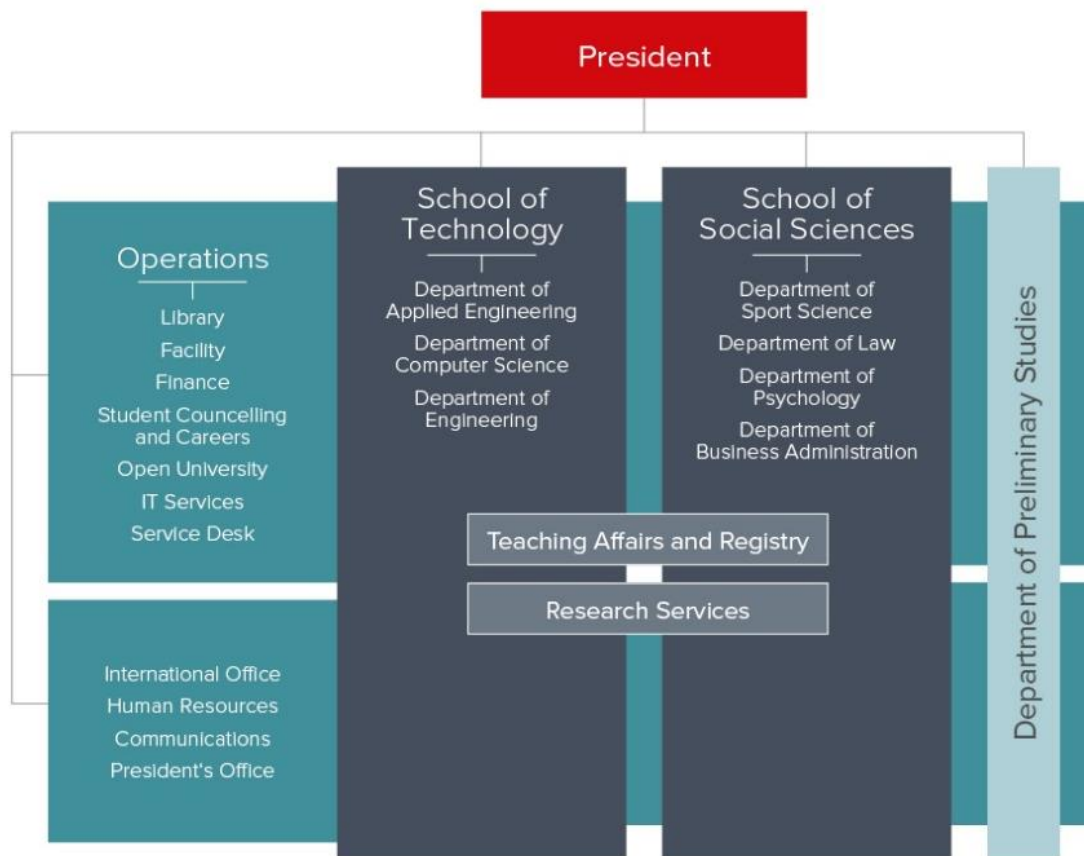
In July 2021, Dr Ragnhildur Helgadóttir was appointed the new President of Reykjavik University. Following that, Dr Bryndís Björk Ásgeirsdóttir was hired to fill Ragnhildur's previous post as Dean of the School of Social Sciences. Until September 2022, the two Deans of the Schools of Technology and Social Sciences worked closely with their respective departments. During that time, both the Research Services (RS) and the Teaching Affairs and Registration (TA) reported directly to the President. The experience was not flawless; the units thrived in some fields but did not get enough support in others. To increase the support provided to them and to connect these two units better to the academic departments, in September 2022, the roles of the Deans were expanded to include TA and RS.

When the Dean of the School of Technology stepped down in August 2022, the Dean of Social Sciences was temporarily appointed Dean of both Schools. During the school year 2022-2023, the Dean of both Schools held meetings with all chairs of departments jointly instead of having two separate meetings as before. This did create more cross-disciplinary discussions, sharing of best practices, and academic collaboration across the two Schools. To further increase collaboration and information flow between units involved in teaching and research, directors and staff of the Department of Preliminary Studies, the Open University, Teaching Affairs, and Research Service were also involved in these meetings, depending on the items' relevance of the items on the agenda. These meetings were held twice a month during the academic year of 2022-2023.

Following the appointment of the new Dean of the School of Technology in May 2023, Dr Ólafur Eysteinn Sigurjónsson, the two Deans jointly decided, with unanimous support from the Department Chairs, to have these Department Chair and Deans meetings shared in the school year 2023-2024, instead of splitting them up by Schools as had been done before. This was decided based on the good experience with the joint meetings and to provide academic leaders and staff with a platform to share best practices, create synergies, discuss educational matters, and coordinate proactively across departments.

In early 2023, Jón Haukur Arnarson became the University's new Executive Director. He has a background in strategy development and quality management and works closely with the Quality Manager of the university.

Organisation chart



Position	Name
President	Dr. Ragnhildur Helgadóttir
Dean, School of Social Sciences	Dr. Bryndís Björk Ásgeirsdóttir
Dean, School of Technology	Dr. Ólafur Eysteinn Sigurjónsson
Department Chair, Department of Sport Science	Dr. Hafrún Kristjánsdóttir
Department Chair, Department of Computer Science	Dr. Henning Arnór Úlfarsson
Department Chair, Department of Applied Engineering	Ásgeir Ásgeirsson
Department Chair, Department of Psychology	Dr. Kamilla Rún Jóhannsdóttir
Department Chair, Department of Law	Eiríkur E. Þorláksson
Department Chair, Department of Engineering	Dr. Ármann Gylfason
Department Chair, Department of Business	Dr. Jón Þór Sturluson
Executive Director, Operations	Jón Haukur Arnarson
Director, Preliminary Studies	Anna Sigríður Bragadóttir
Director, Human Resources	Ester Gústavsdóttir
Director, Open University	Ingunn S. Unnsteinsd. Kristensen
Director, Finance	María Ingibjörg Jónsdóttir
Director, Library and Information Services	Ragna Björk Kristjánsdóttir
Director, Student Counselling and Career Centre	Gréta Matthíasdóttir
Director, International Office	Guðlaug Matthildur Jakobsdóttir
Director, Teaching Affairs and Registry	Hrefna Pálsdóttir
Director, Research Services	Kristján Kristjánsson
Director, Facility	Hákon Örn Arnþórsson
Director, IT Services	Kristján H. Hákonarson
Director, Service Desk	Guðrún Gyða Ólafsdóttir
Director, Communications	Stefán Hrafn Hagalín

Recent developments

Since the year-on-report, RU has focused on how to support students returning after the COVID-19 pandemic, whether to keep the remote study technologies that got the students through the pandemic or to go back to what was the norm before or anything in between. This has been a university-wide discussion and a challenge, as everyone from students to the RU Board has very determined ideas about the topic but differing ones. Slightly different guidelines have been in force for the semesters since the pandemic. Still, the most fundamental decision was taken on the suggestion of the student union, namely to focus on RU's strength as a community and a second home for students and aim to get students back into the building. This, and the current guidelines and strategy, will be discussed below.

Another critical issue has been the quality of the educational experience of doctoral students and the harmonisation of their status and the rules that govern their studies across the university.

RU has worked on strengthening its infrastructure and its robustness. This is evidenced by, e.g., hiring an archivist and enhancing legal counsel services related to general data protection regulation (GDPR) and IT security. The further formalisation and strengthening of specific key processes and quality enhancement matters is also underway, as evidenced by the harmonisation of SLRs across the institution and the Department Chairs' quality reports, which allows for the discussion, support, and sharing of best practices concerning matters of concern or issues discussed by the SLRs.

In 2022, RU joined [NeurotechEU](#), an alliance with eight other European universities. The quality managers of those universities form a particular group and meet (last in Elche in May 2022). The informal network and documents that RU gets access to through these partners have proved both inspirational and practical help in quality matters. RU is still working on taking full advantage of this.

Substantial work has been done in addressing issues from the IWR report. A list of action items developed after the last strategy revision has been compiled and the progress is regularly reviewed and updated by the management group. See appendix.

RU strategy

In the Fall of 2021, the Executive Council decided, with the approval of the Board of RU, to revise the university's strategy from 2017 instead of developing a strategy to 2030 or beyond. This was based partly on the fact that the strategy from 2017 had been implemented only partially; some aspects were well on track while others had not been touched upon, and the fear was that it would unduly affect further thinking. The leadership team was also new at its jobs, and the possibility that Covid would disrupt operations again (as in the spring of 2021) was still there. The departments and leadership, along with student leaders and the Board, therefore made a "quick" revision of the strategy, which gave us the following emphases:

Emphases 2022-2023

THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE	KNOWLEDGE CREATION	CONFLUENCE	EXCELLENCE
– Learning founded on excellence in teaching	– Leading in research	– Active international collaboration	– Desirable workplace
– Flexible study paths	– Active in sharing with the community and in the utilisation of knowledge	– Close cooperation with industries and the professional community	– Modern facilities and a supportive environment for study and research
– Life-long learning	– A leading University of innovation	– Interdisciplinary collaboration	– Constant monitoring of quality for improvement

Overview of the results of strategy 2022-2023 (External link): [RU Strategy - Focus for 2022 - 2023](#)

Responsibility

The people responsible for the implementation of these emphases are the President, the Deans, Department Chairs and other leaders of units of the university. All have pledged to cooperate on the strategy's performance and are responsible for task lists belonging to their respective teams.

Each department and support unit, as well as the central administration, made a task list based on these strategic emphases. Progress is tracked, but the departments have differed somewhat in implementing the changes and which elements of the strategy they deem necessary. Most of the tasks are well underway and are supposed to be completed by the end of the year when a final meeting will be held to map the changes that have been accomplished.

Various changes

Amongst the changes made on an institutional level under point 1 (Learning based on excellence in teaching) are the strengthening and harmonising of PhD studies, policymaking concerning digital access to materials and digital education, and offering more courses to people outside Reykjavik, which RU has done in cooperation with the University of Akureyri.

Under point 3 (Lifelong and continuous learning), the Open University has been strengthened and now has closer ties to the academic departments of RU. Amongst other things, an advisory board comprised of people from the academic departments has been put in place for the Open University to ensure the scientific quality and robustness of the course offerings.

Concerning research, we are thinking carefully about how best to strengthen the support for researchers seeking international grants. NeurotechEU has proven useful regarding resources, courses, and inspiration, especially concerning transdisciplinary research.

Scientific outreach towards society and the media has gained importance, among other things, through robust news production, multimedia storytelling through social media and podcasts, innovative technologies, and hiring staff to reach out to industry in specific fields.

Under the point of quality, collaboration across departments, the sharing of best practices and harmonisation across departments, e.g. concerning faculty promotions and workload, the waiving of student fees and numerous other matters, have been key. Another has been the adoption of a particular promotion track for lecturers. Finally, transparency in governance has been increased, and more information has been made available to staff and students.

The new Executive Director has, among other things, focused on ensuring an overhaul of data structures and access to analytics so that the university's decision-making can be even more driven by data and metrics related to quality and its strategy. RU is optimistic that this will further help strategy-driven quality enhancement.

External factors also prompted RU, like most universities, to pay special attention to policies concerning AI. RU has set rules and criteria for using artificial intelligence, and information has been compiled to guide staff in dealing with cases of suspected misuse of generative AI tools and mitigating potential abuse of GenAI tools.

On February 1st 2022, the application for PhD studies in Sport and Exercise Science was approved by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation.

Interdisciplinary study lines are being developed within RU and with other Icelandic universities. Notes on responsibility and performance are available, but formal rules and procedures are in progress and expected to be finalised in fall 2023.

Quality enhancement was a particular point in the 2022-2023 strategy and will be an integral part of the new strategy RU 2030. A draft of a new Quality Policy, based on the ESG guidelines, has been written with the aim to supplement the organisation's long-term plan. It is expected to be finalized in September 2023.

The strategy for 2022-2023 is meant to underscore our commitment to society, students and staff. It is used as a benchmark in all operations of the university.

RU Strategy to 2030

In January 2023, work on a long-term RU strategy for 2030 started. It is expected to be completed in November 2023. The main goal is to formulate a new strategy and vision for the university.

The strategy will form the foundation for an action plan that will be supported by measurable goals where they can be set. The aim is to cover strategic issues in different subjects and minimise the need for specific policies in specific categories of problems.

The strategy process began with a status assessment that was carried out in steps in consultation with selected groups within the university community, but with a particular focus on the university's external environment, e.g., in consultation with industry, the government and other groups that will be defined.

The main goals of the status assessment are to provide an overview of key factors and an evaluation of them:

1. Analysis of external factors that affect the university.
2. What societal changes are foreseeable?
3. What are the needs of the business and professional environment?
4. What are Reykjavik University's strengths, and how can they be used better?
5. What are the universities' weaknesses considering the challenges ahead?

The main aspects of the university's activities and environment will be addressed by examining the available information, analysing data, and conducting interviews with representatives of the groups that influence the universities' activities.

The work is still underway, but as expected, factors outside the university (industry, government and others) provided necessary clarification on external factors, such as the need for qualified people and collaboration, while providing little guidance on teaching and research per se. Cross-disciplinary thematic strategy workshops on, inter alia, research and teaching, are expected to remedy that.

Plans for 2024-2025

Once the development of RU Strategy to 2030 is completed, the university will revise its structure as necessary (as the work now stands, primarily administrative) to enable the university to implement the strategy more effectively. Amongst the changes being considered are forming a special unit on quality in the central administration to facilitate the pooling of resources, support the Quality Manager and work with the leadership of the University, including a quality council.

A dashboard for tracking goals, metrics and milestones in the 2030 strategy will be ready by January 2024.

This will help the University and its leadership systematically and explicitly evaluate input – for instance, from the surveys that RU does regularly, e.g., the first-year experience, the experience of employers hiring new graduates, or teaching evaluation via several methods – and evidence and support the departments in benchmarking against other departments.

Specific issues from IWR report

Design and plans for implementing the QA system

From the report:

"Involve the Deans and Department Chairs in reviewing the design and plans for implementation of the University's Quality Assurance system – this should build on the existing quality cultures and commitment to strategy-driven enhancement and should recognise opportunities provided by the new organisational structure".

Status:

Progress is being made in the implementation of the university's quality assurance system. As part of continuous improvement, the president, deans of schools, quality manager and executive director have done a review of the QA system and have come up with a few suggestions for updates, to simplify and clarify responsibility. The main point so far is the department's annual quality report. Although yet to be officially included in the quality system, a template was made for the report, which the department chairs and deans participated in, and the first reports were submitted after the school year 2022-2023.

The report aims to ensure consistent information on the work of the departments in enhancing the quality of teaching and education. At the same time, the role of the report is to ensure the collection of information about the departments' follow-up of audits and that this information can be used centrally. The reports contain an overview of the departments' main projects and their status, basic information on the number of students, new students and graduates, and information on the faculty and research.

Quality reports will be used to compile the rector's annual report on quality work in RU, which is presented to the Board of Directors and the University Council. The rector's report on quality matters has previously been compiled without the help of such formal reports but in close cooperation with Teaching Affairs, the Deans and the departments. The departmental and overall standard reports will also help the university leadership prioritise and allocate resources as necessary.

Work is ongoing regarding identifying and implementing an appropriate quality document management system. This project's completion date is estimated at the end of the year 2023.

In addition to the changes made to PhD studies, which were an important quality issue, rules on establishing new study programs at RU were reviewed, updated and approved by the executive council in 2022.

- The process was made more explicit, both the working process and approval process.
- New programmes have been established after this rule was approved, and the work process has gone well; some comments have been made, as is normal when starting to work according to a new approach, and they will be taken into consideration, and the procedure updated as necessary.

Informing future Subject-Level Reviews (SLR)

From the report:

“Consider how the revised Quality Assurance system can be used to inform efficient implementation of future Subject-Level Reviews”.

Status:

All departments submitted their SLRs in 2021 or 2022. By increasing centralised support and coordination and making a template that outlines sections of the report and provides guidance on the content, there is much more synergy between the SLR reports. Each chapter had some actions identified, with deadlines and the responsible party specified. In the department's annual quality report (referred to above), the departments provide an overview of the status of their internal quality work, which arose from the SLR work and other internal work on quality assurance. Departments that have external accreditations on study lines also get valuable points and suggestions for improvement from there.

Developing SLR processes and other quality assurance processes based on the QA system is always a work in progress. Department chairs noted that writing the SLR report had been valuable for the department, even though it was time-consuming. With a more structured and formal follow-up, including the new annual quality reports, the aim is to both enhance the implementation of the necessary changes and processes and make this work simpler for all.

Provide more pedagogic and technical support to teaching staff

From report:

“Strengthen and widen the range of support for pedagogic and technological competence to include all people with teaching roles, particularly sessional staff and teaching assistants”.

Status:

Professional advice and support in teaching is available to all RU teachers. This applies both to the installation of courses in Canvas LMS as well as advice on the development of diverse teaching methods and pedagogy.

Efforts have been made to improve access to simple instructions and checklists that concern, e.g., the installation of study materials, assignments and feedback and the primary information needed for teaching preparation. A new support page for teachers has been set up in Canvas, where good instructions are available. Information about the digital tools that are useful in teaching has also been put in one place in Canvas. Teachers are encouraged to use the material and consult a teaching consultant as needed.

It can be a challenge to reach new teachers and especially part-time teachers. In response, a new page was set up on Orion, RU's internal website, which is aimed specifically at part-time teachers. There are links to material that is useful for them in teaching and information on where they can go if they need help, whether from the teaching department, information technology or otherwise.

A new e-mail address within Teaching Affairs, canvas@ru.is, was put into place in the fall of 2023. All inquiries regarding Canvas should be sent there, as well as requests to book appointments with employees.

Events for teachers

Teaching affairs organises courses, educational talks and workshops for teachers to strengthen and improve pedagogic competence. A teaching development day is held once a year. Then guest speakers are brought in from abroad, or RU teachers give educational talks, e.g., about projects or innovations in teaching that have proven successful. All part-time teachers are invited to these events.

Twice a year, courses are held for new teachers, faculty and part-time teachers. The system is in continuous review with the aim of enhancing the quality of teaching and learning by better-preparing teachers. Recent developments are:

- More courses are held each year. Three before the start of the fall semester, one in June, two in August, and two before the spring semester.
- The courses are available in both Icelandic and English.
- Teachers can access recordings of the courses.
- Canvas Clinic, an opportunity for teachers to get hands-on support and consultation as they work on Canvas course sites, is available after each course.

Along with the challenge of getting new teachers and part-time teachers to attend the courses, the procedure for registering them for the courses has been improved, and follow-up is greater. Departments are informed about attendance and are responsible for teachers who did not attend a course contacting an educational developer before teaching begins.

According to a new procedure for recruiting and reception of part-time teachers, those responsible for recruitment shall ensure that part-time teachers receive information about the course and available assistance. It will then be put into contracts with part-time teachers that they are expected to attend classes, and hopefully, this will lead to better attendance and them getting the training and assistance they need.

New courses for teaching assistants

Another novelty is courses for teaching assistants (TAs). That group is diverse, and their areas of responsibility differ, and not all departments needed a path for them. From 2023, one course per semester is held for all teaching assistants. The goal is to give TAs, often RU students, sound advice regarding teaching and communication with teachers and students. Being a TA is a responsibility, and adequate training of TAs is part of maintaining quality in learning and teaching RU.

Revised teaching evaluation by students

Finally, the university notes that student teaching evaluations have been revised twice – in cooperation with the student union and department student organisations. This was done in part to prevent problems which had arisen, primarily poor participation and anonymous harassing comments.

Other matters relating to teaching development

The Teaching Development Fund of Reykjavik University aims to strengthen teaching, innovation in education and the quality of teaching at the university through RU's teaching strategy. Permanent RU employees who supervise or teach courses at the university can apply for a grant.

The project "Quality of university teaching in the digital age" received an ISK 46 million grant to promote the professional development of university teachers. The funding comes from The University Cooperation Fund, which was set up by the Ministry of Higher Education, Industry, and Innovation, and all Icelandic universities participate in this project. With the collaboration, there will be created a standard supply of pedagogic material for university teachers that will be available to all those involved in university teaching and teaching development at the university level in Iceland.

Technological competence

The focus is to improve the environment in which educational activities are undertaken and facilitate access to the systems used in RU, with more explicit instructions and assistance from teaching advisors.

A digital teaching and learning advisor has a position within Teaching affairs. Teachers can get help with recordings, e.g., during lectures, short videos or presentations, and the processing is in the hands of the advisor. The main challenge lies in encouraging more teachers to use the service. In the fall of 2023, systematic work will be done to promote this service.

In digital education, universities also face challenges regarding artificial intelligence tools. In that context, the possible effects of artificial intelligence, such as ChatGPT and OpenAI, on teaching methods and assessment have been at their highest. Considering this, RU needed to establish rules and criteria for using artificial intelligence. Information has been compiled to provide staff with guidance on dealing with cases of suspected misuse of generative AI tools (Guidelines on AI misuse) but also on mitigating potential abuse of GenAI tools, e.g., rethinking assessment. Revisions to RU General Rules of Study and Assessment were noted along with guidelines for students on best practices for using generative AI systems in Education.

Various things regarding systems and enhancement in digital education that RU wants to improve call for further technical support. Whether that support comes from Teaching Affairs or IT or as co-operation, it needs to be better mapped and ensured that technical support for teachers is available, both during teaching and exam periods.

Expedite the implementation of a Student Information System

From the report:

“Expedite the implementation of a Student Information System”.

Status:

Systems landscape and data integration. Significant progress has been made around the necessary changes for the SIS system architecture and analytical capabilities. Limited functionality remains in the current MySchool system. Still, systematic improvements have been made in most areas of the current system based on the best-of-breed strategy described earlier. This includes:

- System Integration. Data is now integrated between the various RU systems through an integration layer. This ensures up-to-date information throughout the RU system platform.
- Learning Management System. Canvas and connected systems have replaced all LMS functionality originally coming from MySchool.
- Group Management System. Group Management is still handled partly in MySchool as well as in Canvas. Information about groups coming from MySchool is integrated with Canvas. TermTime is used to organise group schedules.
- Grading Systems. All grading is done through Canvas. Information on grades and weights is transferred to MySchool through data integration.
- Continuous Education. Within RU Open University, Eduframe and Canvas are used to facilitate all marketing and management of open courses and continuous education offers.
- Course Evaluation System. Course evaluation is now done through Explorance Blue, a separate cloud-based system. Explorance Blue has a tight integration with Canvas and offers built-in reporting capabilities, making reporting and analytics available to management users.

Enhanced analytical capabilities

In 2022 and 2023, a significant emphasis has been put on advancing the data and analytical environments of RU. The main driving factors of this change are the need for high-quality management information daily and a pending change in the funding of Icelandic universities. With the expected changes in the funding model, the institutions will be moved away from a quantity-based to a quality-based funding model, thereby putting different pressures on managerial decision-making within the university.

The journey towards becoming a more data-driven organisation is still ongoing, but significant milestones have been reached during the last two years.

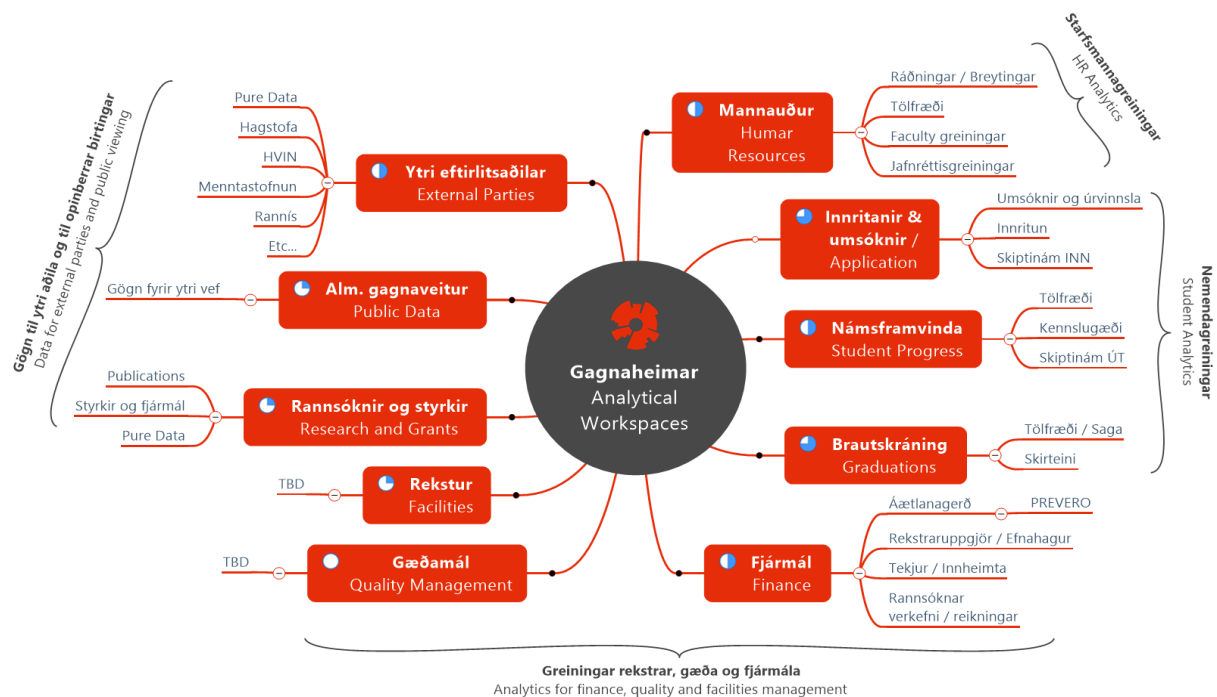
The capability of the University in data management has been dramatically strengthened by hiring two data management specialists who have been working hard on restructuring data management systems and developing management reports. The university now believes it has a solid foundation for a future-proof analytical environment, collecting data from all the significant systems daily into the RU Data Warehouse (RUDW). The database is designed with management reporting and analytics in mind, focusing on the significant information areas of the universities management and operations.

At the same time, the accompanying dashboards and analytical workspaces need further development. This has now gotten an increased focus, and several significant milestones have been reached or are scheduled.

- Data is now centrally processed within the RUDW, increasing the accuracy of general data deliveries internally and externally.
- General reporting and dashboarding functionality are provided using Microsoft Power BI and Microsoft Reporting Services.
- Financial reporting and planning functionality is provided through Prevero.

The picture below, Ru Analytical Workspaces, shows the extent of planned analytical workspaces for RU; the progress pies indicate the importance of data and content available already.

Several significant steps are still necessary to increase the general implementation of data-driven decision-making within RU. Users must receive further training, general data literacy needs to improve, KPIs must be defined better and managed/tracked, and content must be easily accessible. These process steps are planned for the rest of 2023 and into 2024.



RU Analytical Workspaces

Support academic staff in managing online student interactions

From the report:

“Support academic staff with techniques and technologies to help them efficiently manage large volumes of student online inquiries and emails”.

Status:

More and varied use of technology in teaching and Faculty/Student interaction has resolved this issue, which was severe at the time. Faculty and Department offices agree that this is no longer a problem.

Explore career review and development process.

From the report:

“Involve senior academic staff to explore the benefits of introducing a career review and development process for a wider and longer-term view than the current annual Faculty Contribution Report through a process to include and acknowledge teaching and service in addition to research”.

Status:

In 2021-2022, career development and promotion processes were reviewed, with the twin goals of clarifying the criteria that must be fulfilled for promotion and enhancing support for young faculty members. The university also developed new promotion criteria for lecturers.

The idea was that the University promotion criteria and processes – formed by the Research Council and revised by that Council and the Executive Council – would form a framework within which Schools and Departments could develop their own compatible processes and support structures.

The School of Technology Dean and Department Chairs then set promotion rules, formulating a support system (a Senate / Career Development Group) tasked with advising and supporting faculty and suggesting promotions. The School of Social Science Dean and Department Chairs chose another route, partly because of gender issues with senior faculty reporting to junior faculty. It tasked the Department Chairs with advising and supporting Faculty.

Both methodologies have pros and cons, but the university later determined that specific additional processual criteria and the denial of promotion at the sole discretion of the Dean, provided for in the SoT rules, were not compatible with the university-wide regulations, and they have since been disregarded.

The focus of the new career development system is to further clarify expectations and support faculty. It has proven useful, e.g., ensuring young faculty balance their duties and refrain from sabotaging their careers by focusing on non-rewarding activities only. Biannual interviews (across the university) ensure that the Department Chair and each employee know where the employee stands concerning what is needed to fulfil job responsibilities, strengthen as a professional and progress towards promotion.

All faculty members submit a form before those interviews describing their teaching since the last interview, lessons learned, plans, workload and administrative duties, opportunities and challenges, well-being at work and life-work balance. The discussions are based on this and the FCR, which has been discussed before and pertains primarily to research, research grants, cooperation, etc. The

interviews focus on career development, quality assurance (self-evaluation of courses, courses taken, student feedback), planning the next two school years and well-being.

A new system for documenting those interviews is being implemented. This is based on user feedback, for the older technological solution for documenting the interviews was widely condemned as not user-friendly. It is therefore hoped that documentation will be more secure after the change.

In early 2022, the rules for the teaching promotion track were finalised and approved. The regulations aim to actively support the development of lecturers at RU to encourage their progression, ensure the integrity of the advancement process and verify that promoted employees fulfil the criteria for the titles they are awarded. The system also provides a more transparent salary structure and enables fairer implementation of, e.g., study leaves amongst lecturers.

Increase transparency and formalisation when hiring sessional teachers.

From the report:

“Increase transparency and formalisation in the selecting and appointment of sessional teachers”.

Status:

Substantial progress has been made regarding oversight and formalisation of contracts with sessional teachers. Best practices have been shared and discussed at the University level, and the making of contracts and electronic signing of them has been centralised, thereby providing better tracking of documents.

A procedure for the appointment of sessional teachers is being finalised and was discussed at the meeting of the two schools in August. It aims to coordinate the hiring and onboarding process within departments and define responsibility. Those are minimum requirements, and some departments will keep more detailed requirements.

Consider encouraging shared support for international research applications.

From the report:

“Consider whether the University could encourage the creation of an Icelandic common resource to support applications for international research programmes”.

Status:

The educational ministry is leading the effort of creating a common resources and cooperation among Icelandic universities. One billion IKR was awarded in 2022, and more special funding will be available in the fall of 2023. RU has been active in applying but is also quite vocal that more support for international cooperation and benchmarking is needed.