Quality Board
for Icelandic Higher Education

Guidelines for Chair and Team Members for doctoral accreditation reviews

September 2021

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ABBREVIATIONS and DEFINITIONS

Board	Quality Board for Icelandic Higher Education
ESG	Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. Also known as European Standards and Guidelines.
Department	Department applying to offer doctoral education
IWR	Institution-Wide Review
Ministry	Ministry of Education, Science and Culture
QEF	Quality Enhancement Framework
QEF2	Second round of the Quality Enhancement Framework
Application	Application submitted by Department for accreditation of doctoral studies
SLR	Subject-Level Review. These are internal reports written by individual academic units ('Department' or 'Department') for purposes of internal quality assurance. These reviews involve an external independent expert in the review process, and centre on the unit's standards of degrees awarded, quality of the student experience and management of research. SLRs are submitted to the Quality Board.
University	University in which the department is located

SECTION I. GENERAL INFORMATION AND PRINCIPLES

a) *Purpose of this Guide*

The purpose of this Guide is to orient the Chair and Team Members to the process of accrediting doctoral studies in ▓▓▓▓ at ▓▓▓▓ University.

b) *Review Principles*

This review is carried out in the enhancement spirit that is the hallmark of the Quality Enhancement Framework for Icelandic Higher Education (hereinafter, QEF) and the basis for subject-level reviews and institution-wide reviews. This guide therefore makes frequent reference to the 2nd edition of the *Quality Enhancement Handbook for Icelandic Higher Education*[1] (hereinafter, *QEF2 Handbook*). All members of the Team should ensure that they are familiar with the principles of the QEF2 Handbook, as well as processes and elements of the QEF2 Handbook that pertain to this review prior to reading any materials submitted by the University. The QEF2 Handbook includes annexes that are important for the Team, notably the frame of reference for confidence judgments detailed in Annex 11, which is anchored in the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (hereinafter, ESG).

Three defining features of the QEF should be kept in mind at all stages of the review:

> First, it recognises that each university operates in a specific context and has its own priorities and goals; each university should be evaluated in the context of its own mission and values, with fitness for purpose as the principal criterion. In the context of this review, this entails that the evaluation should ascertain whether the Department can meet its stated aspirations for the doctoral programme.

> Second, the approach is enhancement-led. Enhancement means 'taking deliberate steps to bring about improvement'; it entails quality assurance but goes beyond it.

> Third, the process results in two judgements of confidence: in the management of quality of the student experience (quality) and in the standards of degrees and awards (standards). See *QEF2 Handbook*, § 93-98, for further details.

The Quality Board, Ministry and University have also agreed on Terms of Reference for this review (Appendix II). The review is conducted according to Rules 37/2007 pertaining to doctoral studies at higher education institutions (Appendix III), issued pursuant to Article 7 of the Higher Education Act, No 63/2006[2].

Review Team

The Review Team (hereinafter, the Team) is composed of three international experts, of whom one is the Chair, and another is Team Secretary. The fourth member is an Icelandic student, who is a full member of the Team. The Team is supported in logistical matters by the Secretariat of the Quality Board. The Team works together to prepare for and undertake a visit to the university being reviewed and write the review report.

The process of this review is stipulated in Terms of Reference (Appendix II) that are anchored in Rules 37/2007 (Appendix III). The review will be based on an Application prepared in accordance with Rules 37/2007,

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[1] https://qef.is/assets/PDFs/Others/QEF2-Handbook-for-website.pdf. More information on QEF is available on the Board website at www.qef.is.

[2] https://qef.is/assets/PDFs/Others/Act-632006.pdf

submitted by the Department on March 2, 2020 (hereinafter, Application). The review process results in a written report from the Review Team that concludes with a recommendation to the Icelandic Minister of Education of, Science and Culture on whether to grand accreditation, or not. The final accreditation decision is then up to the Minister.

SECTION II. OVERVIEW OF THE REVIEW PROCESS

This section contains information about the general process of the review, as well as some practical and logistical information.

a) Submission of Application and Team Response

Before the review visit to the university, Team members will receive the Application from the Department. The Application is a confidential document that, in essence, is the Department's own careful consideration of its capacity and capability to offer doctoral education.

Other documentation that will be supplied to the Team comprises:

- The university's own Quality Handbook
- A report of the most recent Board-led Institution-Wide Review (hereinafter, IWR) of the University.
- A report of the most recent Subject-Level Review (hereinafter, SLR) of the applicant Department.
- Any documents, available in English, that will help the Team to understand the programmes' processes and structures.

Section III, below, provides further details on how to read and respond to these documents.

b) Preparing for Review Visit

Before the review visit, the Team will decide whether the Application provides an appropriate basis to support the review. The Chair will lead an electronic discussion with the team (email, electronic conference calls, etc.) on the Application, receive requests for more information or material from Team members, and communicate those requests to the University through the Team Secretary. Responses to these requests will be fed back, as appropriate, to the Team members. The Chair will develop with the University a programme of meetings for the site visit. The Chair will lead discussions within the Team on the responsibility for chairing meetings and collecting bullet points for different sections of the report.

To gain familiarity with the Icelandic higher education sector, please see Appendix I for information on the sector, including law 63/2006 on universities. An introductory video on Iceland and its higher education sector is also available on the Board's website[3].

c) Review visit and conduct of meetings

The Team will meet and engage with a wide range of management, staff, students and other stakeholders. The schedule should include time slots for three different types of meetings:

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[3] https://qef.is/publications-and-resources/

i. <u>Review meetings</u>. In these meetings, the Team would meet with management, staff and students from the University, as well as other stakeholders. Meetings would normally involve a maximum of 10 interviewees (fewer if the meetings are online). Each meeting should have clear aims, and it would be the responsibility of the designated meeting chair to introduce the Team members, request a brief introduction of attendees, and keep time to ensure that all issues are sufficiently covered. Meetings are normally no longer than one hour but may take longer if there are multiple themes to explore with a given group of interviewees.

ii. <u>Interim meetings</u>. The Team would meet privately to record the salient points from the most recent meeting(s) in the form of 'bullets'. Interim meetings would be scheduled after one or two review meetings. Interim meetings would normally be no longer than 15 minutes.

iii. <u>Follow-up meetings</u>. The schedule would include slots for "follow-up" meetings, to be conducted as needed with management, staff or students from the University, or other stakeholders. The purpose of these meetings would be to triangulate or confirm information gathered in previous meetings. Follow-up meetings would be fairly short, normally around 20 minutes.

Taking notes should be left largely to the Team Secretary to allow members to engage with the attendees and ensure that all of them are given an opportunity to speak.

Below, please find two different options for the format of the review visit, depending on whether an onsite visit is possible or not. Regardless of visit format, the first and last meetings would be with the relevant management representatives from the University and Department. The last meeting will be held to resolve any possible misunderstandings that may have arisen and complete any other unfinished business. However, the Review Team will not communicate its judgements at this stage: those will be included in a draft report that will be sent to the university for fact checking approximately 11 weeks following the visit (see Section IV).

Appendix VI contains a note on Professionalism during the review process. Appendix VII contains tips for conducting effective interviews. Appendix VIII contains a sample team script for online meetings. Appendix IX contains a sample meeting information sheet for attendees from the university. Appendix X contains a sheet with general guidelines on the conduct of online meetings for attendees from the university.

Option 1: Onsite visit in Iceland

If an onsite visit can be arranged:

- Day 1: The Team arrives in Iceland and meets for dinner.
- Day 2: A full-day Team briefing meeting is scheduled for the Team to get to know one another, receive some additional briefing and agree such details (at least for the first few meetings) as the chair of each meeting and the specific topics/questions that will be discussed.
- Days 3-4: The review site visit takes place at the University.
- Day 5: Team arrives at recommendation and headline bullets (see below).
- Day 6: Team members depart Iceland (at the earliest).

Meetings are scheduled for no more than 8.5 hours each day (8:30-17:00). Below is an illustrative sample schedule for one day of onsite reviews. It may also be instructive to look at meeting schedules from previous IWR site visits in QEF2 that are included as annexes to the Review Reports[4,5].

Time	Type of Meeting	Theme(s)	In Attendance
9:00-10:00	Review Meeting	Theme A	Team and University representatives/stakeholders
10:00-10:15	Interim Meeting	Catch-up and preparation for next meeting	Team Only
10:15-11:15	Review Meeting	Theme B	Team and University representatives/stakeholders
11:15-11:30	Interim Meeting	Catch-up and preparation for next meeting	Team Only
11:30-12:30	Lunch		Team Only
12:30-13:30	Review Meeting	Theme C	Team and University representatives/stakeholders
13:30-14:30	Review Meeting	Theme D	Team and University representatives/stakeholders
14:30-14:45	Interim Meeting	Catch-up and preparation for next day	Team Only
14:45-16:00	Review Meeting	Theme E	Team and University representatives/stakeholders
16:00-16:15	Interim Meeting	Catch-up and preparation for next meeting	Team Only
16:15-17:15	Review Meeting	Theme F	Team and University representatives/stakeholders
17:15-17:30	Interim Meeting	Catch-up and preparation for next day	Team Only

The practical arrangements for the Team's travel and associated expenses are discussed in Appendix XIII.

Option 2: Online review meetings

If an online review is required, the Secretariat will manage the scheduling of meetings and invitations to meetings. The Secretariat will be the host for all meetings and hence control who can be admitted to meetings. Meetings will take place via the Zoom™ platform and will not be recorded.

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[4] https://qef.is/assets/PDFs/Universities/QEF2-RU-IWR-Report-for-website.pdf
[5] https://qef.is/assets/PDFs/Universities/QEF2-Holar-IWR-Report-for-website.pdf

- Two weeks preceding the week of review meetings: The Team agrees on a schedule of online preparatory meetings for a briefing from the Quality Board and to decide the chairs of the individual meetings with the University and what questions will be asked during each of these meetings (at least the initial ones).
- Week of review meetings: Online meetings with the University take place. To prevent fatigue, review meetings would be scheduled for no more than about four hours each day, in four one-hour slots. Interim and follow-up meetings would be scheduled around review meetings.
- Week following the week of review meetings: Team meets online at an opportune time for all members to arrive at judgments and headline bullets (see Section IV, below). The date of this meeting will be determined as soon it is known if the review will be conducted online.

Below is an illustrative sample schedule for one day of online reviews.

Time	Type of Meeting	Theme(s)	In Attendance
9:00-10:00	Review Meeting	Theme A	Team and University representatives/stakeholders
10:00-10:15	Interim Meeting	Catch-up and preparation for next meeting	Team Only
10:15-11:15	Review Meeting	Theme B	Team and University representatives/stakeholders
11:15-11:30	Interim Meeting	Catch-up and preparation for next meeting(s)	Team Only
11:30-12:30	Lunch		Team Offline
12:30-13:30	Review Meeting	Theme C	Team and University representatives/stakeholders
13:30-14:30	Review Meeting	Theme D	Team and University representatives/stakeholders
14:30-14:45	Interim Meeting	Catch-up and preparation for next day	Team Only

SECTION III. Initial response to Application before the visit

This section describes the initial consideration of the Application by the Team. The process of reading and responding to the Application will be the same regardless of whether the review takes place onsite or online.

a) *Initial response to the Application*

Each Team member produces a **brief commentary** (which can be in note form) on the information provided in the Application in relation to Articles 2 and 3 of Rules 37/2007 (see Appendix III) and sends this to the Chair, who will synthesise the various observations.

Besides their commentary on the Application, each Team member is expected to assist the Chair in planning the visit to the University by identifying:

- any particular themes they would wish to see explored during the visit;
- who they should be meeting during the visit;
- any additional documentation to be requested from the Department. Documents that only exist in Icelandic should only be requested if they are of critical importance because of the limited time available to the Secretariat for translation.

The Team will meet online to discuss themes, visit schedule and requests for additional information. The Chair will then agree a visit schedule with the Department and call for more information (if needed).

b) *Reading the Application*

The first reading of the Application is meant to determine if it contains the required information in sufficient detail, as specified in Articles 2 and 3 of Rules 37/2007 (see Appendix III for full text of the Rules). The Application should discuss the following topics:

1. Degree specifications
This includes title of degree and duration of study (Art. 3c); the programme's accordance with the Icelandic Qualification Framework (Art. 3b); admission requirements (Art. 3d); the process for applying to the programme (Art. 3e); and a description of the prospective applicant pool (Art. 3j).

2. Programme administration and links to institutional level
This includes university-level rules and administrative arrangements for doctoral studies (Art. 3f), and their publication (Art 2); links to undergraduate studies and other post-graduate studies at the university (Art 3j); the role and aims of doctoral studies in the University (Art 3a); and link of doctoral programme to academic disciplines currently accredited at the University (Art. 3g).

3. Student environment and support
This includes contractual arrangements for study plans, specifying duties and responsibilities of student, supervisor(s) and university (Art. 2); arrangements to ensure student participation in academic communities related to their studies (Art. 2); facilities and support environment (Art. 3í); and student funding mechanisms (Art. 3l).

4. Staff requirements
This includes requirements for qualified supervisors of doctoral students (Art. 2); number of academic staff that contribute to the programme (Art. 3í); and the qualifications and research activity of academic staff that contribute to the programme (Art. 3h and 3í).

5. Research capacity in the Department

This includes management of research in the Department, and future plans for growing its research agenda (Art 3i); the international comparability of the Department's research activities (Art 3k); and collaboration with research institutions, higher education institutions or businesses, within and outside Iceland (Art. 3k)

In addition, it is important to ask the following general questions when reading the Application:

- Is this Application truly reflective and analytic where appropriate? That is, is it honest about the strengths and weaknesses it identifies?
- Does the Application make reference to and include the views of the right stakeholders, where appropriate?
- Is the Application accompanied by the main sources of evidence on which it is based (CVs, key statistics, committee minutes, etc.) and other documents that may assist the Review Team in understanding the, processes and structures of the Programme, as well as its capacity to offer doctoral studies (e.g., handbooks, prospectuses, etc.)?

SECTION IV. Arriving at Recommendation

This section describes the process of arriving at a recommendation whether to accredit the doctoral programme or not following the review visit, as well as writing the review report in the weeks following the visit. The practical arrangements for arriving at a recommendation and writing the report will be different based on whether the review takes place onsite in Iceland or takes place online (see Section II). However, the same principles and considerations will apply regardless of the review visit format. For the key dates in writing the report, please see Appendix XII.

a) *Headline Outcomes*

Following the conclusion of the visit, the team will meet either in private for a full day on Day 5 (in the case of an onsite review visit) or online within the two weeks (in the case of an online review). During this meeting, the Team will draw up a list of the Headline Outcomes that members have noted down during the course of their visit and decide which of those merit highlighting in the review report. The Headline Outcomes should be organised thematically and note:

- Strengths and examples of good practice
- Areas that need further development

Only then, with the help of these summary findings but on the basis of all the evidence that it has collected, does the Team decide on whether it should recommend accreditation or not.

b) *The Recommendation*

The Review Team arrives at a recommendation on whether or not to accredit doctoral studies at the University. The general approach of arriving at recommendation will be in line with the philosophy of the QEF, as spelled out in the in the QEF2 Handbook. The recommendation should be clearly linked to the requirements set forth in Articles 2 and 3 of Rules 37/2007. The Review Team may also refer in its decision-making to the *10 Basic Principles for Doctoral Programmes* that were codified in the *Bologna Seminar on Doctoral Programmes for the European Knowledge Society* in 2005 (hereinafter, Salzburg Principles; see Appendix IV). Below is a list

of five evaluation themes to be considered when deciding whether to recommend accreditation. Articles 2 and 3 of Rules 37/2007 and the Salzburg Principles provide the basis for this list (see appendices III and IV).

1. Degree specifications. The degree corresponds to the correct level of the Icelandic Qualification Framework. The programme represents a logical continuation of undergraduate studies and other post-graduate studies at the university, in particular the undergraduate and Master's degree programmes in the discipline (as applicable). The doctoral programme is linked to academic disciplines currently accredited at the University. The prospective applicant pool promises to supply an adequate number of applicants to the programme in the near future. Certain flexibility in duration of doctoral programmes should be kept, in particular if family leave needs to be taken from studies.

2. Administration and links to institutional level. The University has a coherent and well-resourced strategy for enhancing the quality of its doctoral programmes. The programme aligns well with University goals and policies for doctoral studies that clearly specify that doctoral training is the advancement of knowledge through original research. University-level rules and administrative arrangements for doctoral studies are clear, appropriate and made public. They encompass policies regarding admission, any course requirements, student support, supervision, degree requirements, and assessment process.

3. Student support. Funding mechanisms available to doctoral students support the role of doctoral students as early-career researchers. Students are provided with appropriate career development opportunities, ideally with some attention paid to the acquisition of transversal skills, notably research methods and scientific integrity, project management oral and written academic communication, etc. Mobility, conference attendance and teaching opportunities should be recognised as added values and considered as parts of career development. Gender perspectives should be taken into account when designing support mechanisms for doctoral students.

4. Supervision. Policies and contractual arrangements are in place for supervision (co-supervision and co-tutelle if applicable) that specify the duties and responsibilities of the student, the supervisor(s) and the university. Requirements for qualified supervisors of doctoral students are in line with Article 2 of Rules 37/2007 and are likely to result in appropriate supervision for doctoral students. Student participation in academic communities related to their studies is appropriately planned for and discussed with the supervisor(s). Details of the processes for replacing supervisors, if required, and addressing conflicts are available to students.

5. Research capacity and research environment. The development of doctoral studies is in line with the Department's research strategy and doctoral studies fit into the Department's plans for growing its research. Facilities and support for doctoral-level research are appropriate and fit for purpose. The number of academic staff that contribute to the programme, as well as their qualifications and research activity, represent sufficient critical mass in subject expertise to support doctoral students as early stage researchers and research partners. Students have opportunities to work in research teams and different research environments, which may include virtual research networks. The Department's research activities are currently, or have reasonable potential to be, internationally comparable to self-identified benchmark comparators. Research collaboration between universities, institutions or organisations at regional, national and international level takes into account the needs of doctoral students.

6. Quality enhancement. The university has in place mechanisms to ensure the quality and standards of its award. Students and staff provide feedback on the programme, resulting in a continuous enhancement process. This includes any indicators used in the evaluation process, the process to monitor the supervision and progress of students, how students making unsatisfactory progress are supported, how feedback from students is collected and used, and any process to monitor students' employment destination.The members of the Review Team should also acquaint themselves with Annex 11 in the *QEF2 Handbook*. Annex 11 is organised around ESG[6] and provides additional guidance for applying the ESG framework in Icelandic higher education.

SECTION V. Writing the Report

a) Content

Annex 10 of the *QEF2 Handbook* provides a specimen Table of Contents for institutional reviews, but the actual structure and content of the report will of course depend on the programme's special characteristics and the Application. Therefore, the Team is encouraged to structure the report so as to fit the purpose of providing support and evidence for the recommendation. The report structure may, for example, follow the structure of Rules 37/20007, or follow the structure of themes proposed in Sections IIIb and IVb (above). The report should contain an annex that briefly outlines the team's findings as they pertain to individual articles in Rules 37/2007. Appendix V contains a template for this annex.

b) Evidence base

There must be a firm evidence base for all major observations and conclusions in the Report, regardless of whether they are about areas in need of improvement or about good practice that deserves special mention. All key sources of evidence should be referenced in the draft text (e.g., Document X; Meeting Y). The references to specific meetings will normally be removed before the draft is sent to the University but kept on file in case of subsequent need. References to documents can stay.

c) Style and language

Each individual section of the report should have the following structure, to the extent possible:

a) What the Department already does
b) What the Department does not do yet
c) Recommendations and benefits of following them
d) Brief summary

Teams are advised to avoid words such as 'seem', 'appear', etc. that signal a hesitation. Such wording may send 'mixed signals' to the Department and become contentious at later stages of the process. Rather, use phrases like "*It was reported to the Team that*…"

Recommendations should be stated as principles or objectives rather than as full-fledged action plans. Where an area needs improvement, it may be appropriate to suggest how this might be done, but as an example for possible action and not prescriptively. In writing recommendations, avoid lukewarm wording. For example, do

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[6] http://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf

not say "*The institution may want to consider doing X*". Rather say: "*The institution should identify ways to do X/achieve Y*".

The Review report should have a Glossary and a list of abbreviations (if appropriate).

The Team should keep in mind that the report needs to be readable to multiple stakeholders, including some stakeholders that may not be well acquainted with the University, Department, or with university life in general. A summary of the review will be posted on the Quality Board's website and be included as annex to the report.

d) *Writing the Report: Steps and Timeline*

The Team Secretary will draft the report but the entire Team is collectively responsible for its content, and is expected to contribute to the draft with comments and reformulations as needed. Once a draft is agreed by the Team, it will be sent to the University, for fact-checking as detailed in §87 of the *QEF2 Handbook*.

Appendix XII contains a suggested timeline for the report writing for this review and Appendix XI discusses the specific role of the Chair, Team Secretary and the Board Secretariat.

APPENDIX I: SOME FACTS ABOUT THE ICELANDIC HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

The Icelandic Higher Education system operates in accordance with Icelandic laws and regulations, including the Higher Education Act (63/2006)[7], the Act on public higher education institutions (85/2008)[8], the National Qualification Framework for higher education (Rules 530/2011)[9,10], Rules on Quality Assurance of Teaching and Research (1368/2018)[11], Rules on Doctoral Studies in Higher Education Institutions (37/2007; in Icelandic only)[12], Rules on the procedure of the Board of Appeal for Higher Education Institution students' complaints (1152/2006; in Icelandic only)[13], and Rules on the Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions (1067/2006; in Icelandic only)[14].

In 2019, there were approximately 18 700 students enrolled at the seven Icelandic higher education institutions. All seven are universities, of which four are public and three are private (not-for-profit). There are no other types of higher education institutions in Iceland.

- Public universities:
    - University of Iceland (UI); est. 1911; approximately 12,400 students
    - University of Akureyri (UNAK); est. 1987; approximately 2,400 students
    - The Agricultural University of Iceland (AUI); est. 2005; approximately 200 students
    - Hólar University (HU); est. 2006; approximately 120 students
- Private universities:
    - Reykjavík University (RU); est. 1998; approximately 3,000 students
    - Bifröst University (BU) est. 1988s; approximately 580 students
    - Icelandic University of the Arts (IUA); est. 1998; approximately 500 students

All seven universities are open to all students holding a matriculation diploma (or equivalent), but admissions exams are in effect in some faculties. All universities offer degrees at the Bachelor and Master levels. UI, RU and RU offer doctoral degrees.

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[7] https://qef.is/assets/PDFs/Others/Act-632006.pdf
[8] https://qef.is/assets/PDFs/Others/Act-852008.pdf
[9] https://www.stjornartidindi.is/PdfVersions.aspx?recordId=8bfec154-2168-4de8-9170-4b19cf11d7c3
[10] http://english.enicnaric.is/national-qualification-framework.html
[11] https://qef.is/assets/PDFs/Others/Rules-pertaining-to-quality-assurance-of-teaching-and-research-in-higher-education-no-1368_2018.pdf
[12] https://www.stjornartidindi.is/PdfVersions.aspx?recordId=9e43f819-38e4-4bc4-9466-e77ce98015ae
[13] https://www.stjornartidindi.is/PdfVersions.aspx?recordId=2e55c0dd-f482-4f07-8143-3e4edc393908
[14] http://www.stjornartidindi.is/PdfVersions.aspx?recordId=9dc4f819-3423-45d1-9ca1-e48a773d793e

APPENDIX II: REVIEW TERMS OF REFERENCE

[To be added]

No 37   17 January 2007

R U L E S

pertaining to doctoral studies at higher education institutions, issued pursuant to Article 7 of the Higher Education Act, No 63/2006

Article 1

Objective

The purpose of doctoral programmes offered by higher education institutions is to provide those pursuing such studies with the knowledge and skills required to enable them to engage in academic research, seek new knowledge, and enter professions which require training and skill in applying scientific or scholarly approaches.

Authorisations issued by the Minister of Education, Science and Culture ("the Minister") to a higher education institution to offer study programmes leading to a doctoral degree amount to a recognition that the relevant institution meets all requirements and conditions laid down in the present rules. In addition, doctoral programmes must fulfil the criteria laid down in the *National Qualification Framework* issued by the Minister of Education, Science and Culture.

Article 2

Doctoral studies

Doctoral studies are based on a project description and a study and research proposal. With reference to the study and research proposal, a contract shall be drawn up between the relevant faculty and the student relating to the organisation of the studies, the rights and obligations of the student and of the supervisor(s) and, where appropriate, the involvement of any other person(s) in the doctoral studies. The contract shall specify any services available to the doctoral student during the studies, and the measures to be taken to ensure the continuity of the studies.

Doctoral students may have more than one supervisor, in which case the role of each supervisor shall be clearly defined in the abovementioned contract. One of the supervisors shall act as the doctoral student's supervisory teacher. The supervisory teacher must be permanently employed at the higher education institution in question.

Those appointed as supervisors of doctoral studies must have completed either a doctorate or equivalent academic studies in the relevant academic discipline, or a related one, and be recognised as specialists in that discipline.

Supervisors must have published papers or works on subjects bearing relation to the student's project in a forum that maintains high academic standards. Supervisors must have an active publication record and a strong research background in their academic disciplines.

At least one of a doctoral student's supervisors must have prior experience of supervising doctoral students or extensive experience of supervising students at the Master's level.

Supervisors must have participated in international collaborative research projects and have experience of raising independent funding from recognised research funds.

Doctoral students must participate actively in the academic community to which their doctoral projects belong.

Doctoral theses shall be defended in public and shall be published.

Each higher education institution shall issue and make public regulations for its doctoral programme(s).

Article 3
Applications for authorisation to establish doctoral programmes

A higher education institution applying to the Minister for authorisation to offer a doctoral programme in a particular academic discipline shall accompany its application with supporting documents providing information about the following:

a. The intended role of the doctoral programme and the aims pursued by the higher education institution.
b. The definition of the doctoral programme with reference to *the National Qualification Framework* issued by the Minister of Education, Science and Culture.
c. The title of the doctoral degree to be awarded and the duration of the studies leading to the degree.
d. A description of the admission criteria and the requirements for adequate preparation.
e. A description of the application process.
f. Information about the administrative aspects of the doctoral programme, including doctoral study committees, doctoral defences and eligibility criteria for opponents.
g. The Ministry's accreditation of the relevant academic discipline.
h. The academic status of staff attached to the academic programme in question, their research records and publications.
i. Information about the organisation of research within the relevant academic programme and plans for its future development.
í. Information about available facilities and working conditions with regard to academic activities, the number of teachers attached to the relevant academic programme and their education and experience.
j. Information about the links between undergraduate and graduate studies and the number of students graduating with a Master's degree in recent years.
k. The higher education institution's position in the relevant discipline, or its subfields, in an international context. Collaboration with research institutions, higher education institutions or businesses, within and outside Iceland.
l. A description of the funding mechanism of the doctoral programme.

Article 4
Authorisation to offer a doctoral programme

The Minister shall appoint an evaluation committee of three independent experts to assess the fitness of higher education institutions to award doctoral degrees. Where it considers this necessary, the committee may call for documents or information in addition to those accompanying the application of the higher education institution.

The evaluation committee shall base its assessment on the substantive aspects of Article 3 of the present rules. Referring to the information provided by each higher education institution, the evaluation committee shall document the conclusions of the assessment and accompany them with a detailed and objective justification.

While authorisations to offer doctoral programmes are granted for an indefinite period of time, the Minister may revoke an authorisation where external quality control reveals that the higher education institution concerned no longer meets general requirements or where any of the factors relating to its strengths and capabilities in the academic discipline to which the doctoral programme is attached have changed significantly.

The Minister shall decide whether to reject or grant applications by higher education institutions for an authorisation to offer a doctoral programme after receiving the opinion of the evaluation committee. Authorisations granted to higher education institutions to offer doctoral programmes shall be in writing and shall take the form of a special certificate.

Article 5
Validity
The present rules are issued on the basis of Article 7, fourth paragraph, of the Higher Education Act, No 63/2006, and shall enter into force forthwith.

Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, 17 January 2007.

Þorgerður Katrín Gunnarsdóttir.

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Guðmundur Árnason.

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Section B – Date of publication: 19 January 2007

This appendix contains the '10 Basic Principles for Doctoral Programmes' that were identified in the *Bologna Seminar on Doctoral Programmes for the European Knowledge Society* published by the European University Association in 2005[15].

Ten basic principles for the third cycle

1. The core component of doctoral training is the advancement of knowledge through original research. At the same time, it is recognised that doctoral training must increasingly meet the needs of an employment market that is wider than academia.

There was clearly a shared view amongst all participants that the core element of all doctoral programmes is, and should remain, training by doing research. Only training by research can provide doctoral candidates with core skills such as problem solving; innovative, creative and critical thinking; analysing and synthesising knowledge; and developing strategies. Doctoral candidates are young professionals who are trained through research and who make an important contribution to the creation of new knowledge, products, methods and systems, and to knowledge transfer. Training by research is the main element that differentiates doctoral cycle from the first and second cycles in the Bologna Process.

With Barcelona and Lisbon goals in mind it is clear that Europe needs more researchers who will be able to work not only in academia, but also in the various sectors of the economy and society, industry, SMEs, public sector, NGOs, etc. This was stressed in several speeches and discussions. Industry requires people who are excellent in specific field, but also offer generic skills such as communication, presentation, teamwork and social skills. Demands on today's researchers are therefore wider and this has to be reflected in the structure and organisation of doctoral programmes. Training in transferable, "generic" skills and competences should become an integral part of all doctoral programmes in order to meet challenges and needs of the global labour market. (See also paragraph 8.)

2. Embedding in institutional strategies and policies: universities as institutions need to assume responsibility for ensuring that the doctoral programmes and research training they offer are designed to meet new challenges and include appropriate professional career development opportunities.

Participants emphasised that doctoral training is a core mission of the university. All regulations, guidelines and/or code of practice in doctoral programmes should be developed and established not only at department or faculty levels, but also at the highest institutional level. There should be only one doctorate and one diploma signed by the Rector that is common for all faculties/institutes of the university. It was felt that this would strengthen the social value and recognition of doctoral degree.

The university is responsible for design, structure and organisation of its doctoral programmes. Institutional rules should cover regulations on recruitment, supervision, exams, evaluations and monitoring, and defence of the thesis throughout the university. Information on all doctoral programmes and regulations should be available on university websites. It was felt that a common portal for all doctoral candidates at the university was a useful instrument to organise and monitor the progress of candidates.

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[15] https://eua.eu/component/attachments/attachments.html?id=724

Universities should develop long-term strategies for doctoral programmes with the focus on building strong research environments and mechanisms for enhancing the quality of doctoral programmes. Career development opportunities for researchers of all categories including doctoral candidates should be a part of the strategies. Lack of transparent career perspectives for researchers is often criticised as one of the reasons why there is such a low interest of young people in science and research. Academic culture should be re-evaluated: doctoral candidates should feel they are needed, respected and welcome and they have career opportunities after completing doctoral studies.

3. The importance of diversity: the rich diversity of doctoral programmes in Europe – including joint doctorates – is a strength which has to be underpinned by quality and sound practice.

The rich diversity of doctoral programmes in Europe was often mentioned as positive characteristics that should be acknowledged and built upon. For the future development of doctoral programmes as the third cycle in the Bologna Process it is important to recognise and understand various scientific, institutional and cultural traditions and values. Throughout Europe, there is a wide diversity of institutional types, national legal frameworks, disciplines, academic and scientific cultures, in which doctoral programmes develop and operate. These environments, reflecting national and regional experience, should be seen as Europe's strength in competition with other regions of the world.

However, Europe's shared diversity and need for collaboration requires transparency and quality. Universities should take full responsibility for quality assurance of doctoral programmes. They should autonomously formulate and enhance their quality criteria and standards in an open and transparent way. Each doctoral programme should contain appropriate measures of research assessment that are consistent with institutional guidelines or regulations.

Diversity of disciplines should be taken into account when building any new doctoral programmes or organising new structures. It is often disciplines and disciplinary differences, and not institutional or country differences that require different approaches. Participants felt that more debate is needed on the development of doctoral programmes within disciplines and among disciplines.

4. Doctoral candidates as early stage researchers: should be recognised as professionals – with commensurate rights - who make a key contribution to the creation of new knowledge.

Doctoral stage should be recognised as the first part in a professional career. The profession of a researcher includes all stages of careers in different sectors. Doctoral candidates should be considered as early stage researchers and research partners and treated as professionals who make an important contribution to the creation of new knowledge. It was noted in the European Charter for Researchers: "Early stage researchers are professionals who are trained through research in the conception or creation of new knowledge, products, processes, methods and systems, and in the management of the projects concerned". Doctoral candidates should preferably be engaged in all levels of governance at the university and participate in decision- making.

The rights and responsibilities of doctoral candidates should be clearly formulated in written agreements signed by candidates, supervisors and institutions. These rights should assure adequate standards of social security, regardless of the legal nature of the employment (health care and parental leave, unemployment benefits, contributions to pension schemes, accident insurance, etc.).

(See also paragraph 10.)

5. The crucial role of supervision and assessment: in respect of individual doctoral candidates, arrangements for supervision and assessment should be based on a transparent contractual framework of shared responsibilities between doctoral candidates, supervisors and the institution (and where appropriate including other partners).

Supervision is considered a crucial part of doctoral training. It is critically important for ensuring good quality of candidates' performance. However, conditions of supervision are often not clear and regulated, and they differ from country to country or institution to institution. There was no common agreement on questions of how supervisors are selected, who can be a supervisor, how often she/he meets with the candidate, how many candidates the supervisor can manage and how the research progress is monitored. Some national or institutional systems seem to be more open and do not provide any rules or control of supervision. In other countries where doctoral training is organised in a structured way (e.g., in doctoral schools) supervision is more a responsibility of the institution than an individual supervisor. Some institutions prefer supervisory panels with several experts/ professors from inside and outside of the university (multiple supervisory), which was considered a good practice example.

Participants agreed that universities should introduce institutional regulations on terms and obligations of doctoral candidates, supervisors and the institution. In addition, a signed contract (agreement) on rights and responsibilities between the three parties can be a good instrument ensuring that each party is aware of their role in the process of doctoral training.

National regulations covering supervision among other issues were introduced in the UK and Ireland (Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education – Postgraduate research programmes - UK; Good practice in the organisation of PhD programmes in Irish universities – Ireland). There are a number of good institutional practices in supervision which were discussed, such as establishment of common portals for all doctoral candidates; writing regular progress reports by students; student logs; a "toolbox" for supervisors with all necessary information on their role and duties; or training of supervisors.

In addition, the European Commission's European Charter for Researchers and a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers offers a set of standards addressed to the Member States in order to encourage institutions to start a dialogue on sustainability of researchers' career. The document includes emphasis on the important role of supervision as a part of successful career development. Also, Eurodoc (The European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers) has prepared a document on the Development of a European Supervision and Training Charter based on data gathered from many European countries.

6. Achieving critical mass: Doctoral programmes should seek to achieve critical mass and should draw on different types of innovative practice being introduced in universities across Europe, bearing in mind that different solutions may be appropriate to different contexts and in particular across larger and smaller European countries. These range from graduate schools in major universities to international, national and regional collaboration between universities.

Participants felt that in order to achieve critical mass of doctoral candidates, new structures of doctoral programmes will need to be developed. However, disciplinary differences and their specific needs in various national, regional or institutional contexts should not be ignored in this process. There are many good innovative practices in different European countries. Not all practices can be easily transferred from one institution / country to another. In some countries the model of graduate/research/doctoral schools has been successfully developed. In smaller countries clustering of students from different regions or even neighbouring

countries has been introduced. Bilateral and multilateral collaboration between universities at regional, national and international level should be an integral part of all forms of doctoral programmes. Doctoral candidates should have the opportunity to work in research teams and different research environments including virtual research networks.

7. Duration: doctoral programmes should operate within appropriate time duration (three to four years full-time as a rule).

The duration of doctoral programmes was discussed in several working groups and panel discussions, but no clear consensus was achieved. Only a minority of research academics thought that it is possible to finish full time doctoral studies within three years. For the majority, a three year period was considered both too short and unrealistic, and four years was preferred as a more appropriate time duration for doctoral studies.

It seems that strict regulation on the duration of doctoral training would not be the right solution. There are various conditions that have an impact on the length of studies, mainly disciplinary differences (e.g., in sciences work in laboratories includes repeating experiments several times during certain periods that cannot be shortened). Gender dimension cannot be underestimated as many female doctoral candidates are at the age of starting the family and they often have to interrupt their studies during maternity leave. For these reasons, certain flexibility in duration of doctoral programmes should be kept, but the length of full time studies should not exceed four years.

In many countries there are a number of doctoral candidates who do part-time studies, which take more time to complete because the candidates have a job in addition to participating in doctoral training. They either start their doctoral studies at a later age after having the first career (e.g., in industry) or they need further professional research training for their career development.

Sometimes doctoral candidates are allowed to combine full-time and part-time form of studies according to their personal or funding situation. For some university representatives this was an unknown concept and they argued for full-time studies that allow young doctoral candidates to work together in a well established research environment rather than doing individual research. They stressed that Europe needs young researchers who will be able to compete in the global labour market. Advocates of part-time studies argued that in the era of changing demographic trends in Europe (decrease of childbirths and increase of aging populations), doctoral programmes should be considered a part of life-long learning in line with the Lisbon objectives (the importance of continuous education in the knowledge based society).

8. The promotion of innovative structures: to meet the challenge of interdisciplinary training and the development of transferable skills.

Considerable attention was paid to the development of transferable skills and interdisciplinary research training. It was agreed that training in transferable ("generic" professional and personal) skills and competences should be offered in each doctoral programme if we want to ensure wider employability of doctoral candidates in different sectors of the economy and society. These skills include communication and presentation skills, writing skills, project and time management, human resources management, financial resources management, teamwork, risk and failure management, etc. Industry seeks young researchers who are flexible, creative, communicative, entrepreneurial, and have good language, intercultural and social skills.

Transferable skills and competences can be taught and improved in courses offered by universities either during the first two years of structured doctoral training or in summer schools, and they should target doctoral

candidates of all disciplines. Some university representatives argue that doctoral candidates cannot acquire transferable skills in courses, but only in everyday work by doing research and related activities such as teaching, writing, active participating in seminars, conferences and projects, etc. ("learning by doing approach"). Although there may be a disagreement among university representatives whether courses in transferable skills should be mandatory or voluntary, all agree that it is very important to offer these courses to all doctoral candidates. Training in transferable skills should, however, form only a small part of doctoral training and should not be overemphasised with respect to original research.

In relation to teaching transferable skills and competences, ECTS was widely discussed. No consensus was found on this issue. Most university representatives agreed that ECTS, if used in doctoral programmes at all, should be restricted to the structured course-part of doctoral programmes (e.g., courses in transferable skills). ECTS is also considered a good tool for international mobility. However, majority of participants strongly disagreed with using ECTS for measuring research progress.

Learning transferable skills and competences is also a way of improving interdisciplinary dialogue. Fast development of the sciences and the emergence of new disciplines and problem- oriented research funding often combine different fields and "pull down" the boundaries of traditional disciplines opening the way to multidisciplinarity. Doctoral training should reflect this development by offering innovative ways of research education. Structures and curricula should be open and flexible enough to allow doctoral candidates to undertake research and theses based on interdisciplinary approach. This seems to be easier to achieve in emerging doctoral/research/graduate schools or clusters in which research is often based on teamwork and collaboration. Organisation of doctoral training within research groups can open new innovative ways to interdisciplinary dialogue.

9. Increasing mobility: Doctoral programmes should seek to offer geographical as well as interdisciplinary and intersectoral mobility and international collaboration within an integrated framework of cooperation between universities and other partners.

Doctoral programmes should provide mobility experience to doctoral candidates. There is a wide range of programmes providing opportunity to mobility, on the other hand there are still a lot of obstacles that limit mobility of doctoral candidates throughout Europe. Existing programmes vary from the EC Marie Curie programmes to joint doctoral programmes, co-tutelle arrangements, international collaboration among research groups or research periods abroad. Although one of the aims of the Bologna process is an increased mobility, the same obstacles appear frequently, i.e. insufficient financial resources; family-related issues; gender disadvantages; administrative obstacles; social, cultural and language obstacles; lack of social security; lack of information; opposition from supervisors; etc. Mobility should be recognised as an added value and considered as a part of career development. Often this is not the case and reintegration after mobility periods is difficult. Mobility should be encouraged, recognised and not penalised.

Recognition of qualifications and degrees in Europe is another obstacle to mobility although it has been improving with setting up European Qualification Framework (EQF) and Dublin Descriptors that should le ad to recognition of foreign degrees from accredited universities in Europe.

Mobility covers also interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral mobility. Doctoral candidates and young researchers should be encouraged to move from one sector to another (e.g., university – industry and back). Universities have to develop partnerships with different partners from different sectors, build networks and collaborations based on institutional and international agreements.

During the discussions on international co-operation, the issue of European doctorate re- emerged. It seems that there is no wide consensus on this issue. Most participants needed to be convinced of the merits and rationale for the idea of European doctorate. They did not recognise the need for European label per se as it does not carry any quality attribute. Supporters of European doctorate, on the one hand, stressed its European dimension in terms of mobility and international collaboration, while on the other hand, the opponents noted that European or international dimension can be achieved without the European label through scientific networking activities amongst researchers.

10. Ensuring appropriate funding: the development of quality doctoral programmes and the successful completion by doctoral candidates requires appropriate and sustainable funding.

All participants agreed that if we want to ensure high quality doctoral programmes, appropriate funding is crucial. Doctoral candidates are not just fee-paying students who bring an income for the institution, but should be also considered junior research and teaching staff who contribute to the creation of new knowledge. Institutions and governments should provide sustainable financing of doctoral programmes. The organisational transformation of doctoral programmes towards more structured doctoral/research/graduate schools requires significantly higher financial investments than traditional individual doctoral training. This new development of doctoral programmes cannot be ignored both at national and European level if we want to compete with graduate schools in the USA and other non-European countries.

Financing of doctoral candidates in Europe varies from country to country and from institution to institution. Doctoral candidates are funded by grants, fellowships, scholarships, subsidies or by private (personal) funds. Funding is closely related to status of a doctoral candidate. In some countries doctoral candidates are considered students, often without all social rights (e.g., without pension rights or unemployment benefits), while in others they are employees and early stage researchers (or combination of both) with regular employment contracts and all related social rights. For a successful completion of doctoral studies full funding of doctoral candidates is crucial. It seems that three-year grants or fellowships in most cases do not cover the whole study period and candidates are often left without any financial support during the period of writing the thesis (usually the fourth year). As a consequence, candidates are searching for other sources of financing at the crucial stage when they need to fully concentrate on the completion of their doctoral studies. Many university representatives would prefer four-year fully funded doctoral programmes in order to achieve high scientific quality and integrity.

APPENDIX V: Template for annex on team findings in line with Rules 37/2007

The headings from Art. 3 of Rules 37/2007 on areas to be evaluated in an accreditation review of doctoral studies are provided below, together with a summary of the Team's findings and a reference to the section(s) of the report in which they are addressed.

Headings from Art. 3 of Rules 37/2007	Report section(s)
a. *The intended role and aims of the doctoral programme.* [text]	[section(s)]
b. *Definition of the doctoral programme with reference to the National Qualifications Framework.* [text]	[section(s)]
c. *Title of degree to be awarded and duration of studies.* [text]	[section(s)]
d. *Admission criteria.* [text]	[section(s)]
e. *Application process.* [text]	[section(s)]
f. *Administrative aspects of the doctoral programme, including doctoral study committees, doctoral defences and eligibility criteria for opponents.* [text]	[section(s)]
g. *The Ministry's accreditation of the relevant academic discipline.* [text]	[section(s)]
h. *The academic status of staff attached to the academic programme in question, their research records and publications.* [text]	[section(s)]
i. *Organisation of research within the relevant academic programme and plans for its future development.* [text]	[section(s)]
j. *Available facilities and working conditions with regard to academic activities, the number of teachers attached to the relevant academic programme and their education and experience.*	[section(s)]

	[text]	
k.	*Links between undergraduate and graduate studies and the number of students graduating with a Master's degree in recent years.* [text]	[section(s)]
l.	*The higher education institution's position in the relevant discipline, or its subfields, in an international context. Collaboration with research institutions, higher education institutions or businesses, within and outside Iceland.* [text]	[section(s)]
m.	*Funding mechanism of the doctoral programme.* [text]	[section(s)]

APPENDIX VI: A NOTE ON PROFESSIONALISM

All individuals acting on behalf of the Quality Board as part of this review are expected to hold themselves to the highest professional standards, including in their professional attire and the manner in which they interact with the Department under review and within their Team. The following principles should be kept in mind during the whole process.

Equality

Review Team members should treat all with whom they interact in the same manner. This includes ensuring that everyone's opinion is heard in meetings regardless of position, seniority, or group membership. Dismissive or derogatory comments about interviewee statements should be avoided at all costs. Team members should also be careful not to dismiss how interviewees report experiencing a given event or be dismissive of strong feelings they may have about a given issue. The same principles apply to the interactions within the Review Team.

A note on students

Students play an integral role in this Review. The student member of the Review Team is a full member of that Team and has the exact same rights and responsibilities as other members. The role of the student member is not just to gauge students' opinions and provide the comforting presence of a peer in interviews with students. The student is on an equal footing with other Team members in all respects. If the chairing of meetings is shared among the team members, as is normal practice, then the student member should be invited (though not obliged) to take the chair on one or more occasions.

Confidentiality

The Application is a confidential document. It should not be distributed, as a whole or in part, outside the Review Team. Any information contained in the Application, but not in the public domain, should also be treated as confidential. Proceedings of Team meetings should remain confidential, as well as any information gathered in interviews on site. The Review Report, and any part thereof, is confidential, with the exception of a summary of the review that will be posted on the Board's website. It will also be included as an annex in the full report until it has been published.

Team members should be careful not to divulge the sources for statements made in meetings during the visit, including relaying statements made by one group to the next group they meet. Team members should also make sure to paraphrase oral comments, particularly when writing about any sensitive issues, and ensure that any such comments cannot be traced to individuals or groups of individuals.

Impartiality and objectivity

It is crucial that objective criteria be applied in arriving at a recommendation, and that all information obtained in the process of review be received, interpreted and re-presented without prejudice. It is particularly important that Team members not let any preconceptions they may hold towards groups of people, disciplines, schools of thought or research traditions affect their impartiality and objectivity in seeking and processing information and in arriving at conclusions in their work. These principles also apply when reviewing areas in need of improvement and writing recommendations in the report itself (see below).

Transparency

Transparency is one of the principles of QEF2, and that principle naturally extends to the work of Review Teams. Transparency is best ensured by following the procedures described in the *QEF2 Handbook*. Transparency also entails openness in communication. Open communication between the Team and the Department is achieved by ensuring that the Department is well informed and briefed on the Review before the Team arrives, by collaborating with the Department in creating the site visit schedule, by scheduling frequent meetings between the Team and Department management and contacts during the visit itself, and by scheduling a liaison meeting, usually at the end of each day, with a nominated Department contact to monitor progress and address any concerns.

Evidence base

Teams can best demonstrate accountability for their work by providing strong evidence for all statements supporting a recommendation. The evidence base must be comprised of objective information collected from reliable sources – be they survey data, data from student records databases, data from Learning Management Systems, or information gathered from interviews on site. In general, the Team should be mindful of asking for evidence for all opinions presented to them in the Application or in interviews. In addition, teams should always seek confirmation of important information from more than one source.

It is important to remember that the primary role of the Review Team during review meetings is to gather evidence related to the capability and capacity of the Department to offer doctoral studies. In order to do this in the most effective manner possible, it is important to avoid:

- Engaging in an argument with a member of the Department or University community or another Team member;
- Providing advice in a meeting or pushing an opinion on a certain matter;
- Making statements along the lines of: "At my university/In my country, we do X, Y, and Z".

It might happen that the Team receives an anonymous complaint about the Department. The response to such cases should be discussed with the Secretariat first.

APPENDIX VII: SOME TIPS FOR CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS

This appendix provides tips for conducting interviews. If the review is conducted online, some minor adjustments, not described below, might be required. It should be read in conjunction with Annex 9 in the *QEF2 Handbook*.

The style of the whole visit will be collegial and open. This is a peer-based process: a discussion among equals. To foster this aspect, supervisors should normally not sit in the same meetings as their subordinates, and staff and students should be interviewed separately.

Rather than using leading or closed (yes /no) questions, strive to ask open questions such as "How do you do X?" or "How do you make sure that X, Y, and Z happen?" It is also important to remember that students and staff may not know the exact names or terminology for the quality initiatives at the department. So rather than asking about specific initiatives, operations or functions (for example, pastoral care), it may be more productive to ask how the Department is systematically creating a supportive and inclusive environment for its students.

When asking for evidence, there are a number of ways to solicit information. Below are just a few examples of possible questions to ask:

- What are the strategic plans in place to achieve this outcome?
- How do you know you are reaching your goals?
- Based on what evaluation/data/indicators do you make the statement that X is happening/that problem Y has been solved?
- Can you tell me about an action plan related to this project/issue, such as goals, performance indicators, accountabilities, milestones and resources?
- Have you done a SWOT analysis (or similar) of this situation/challenge that the Department is facing at present?

It is important to remember that the Department is not on trial, and there is usually no need to repeatedly push for clarification or details if they are not forthcoming. Questions can, and sometime must, be probing but the overall tenor of the engagement should be one of dialogue. Rather than persisting with an unproductive line of questioning, it is usually better to stop and note that this information could not be provided by the representative(s) at this meeting. Those questions can be re-visited in subsequent meetings with other interviewees, if need be.

The Team will be meeting different groups and will need to have a productive dialogue with each one: management; academic and administrative staff; students; and stakeholders from various backgrounds. The University and Department will be asked to ensure to the best of its ability that any person is not interviewed more than once. Below are some tips for conducting interviews with the different groups that the Team will meet.

Management

In meetings with management, it is important to be careful not to divulge sources of critical comments gathered in previous meetings. Rather than using negatively charged terms such as "shortcomings," "failures," or "weaknesses" it may be more productive to talk about "possible areas for improvement" and "opportunities

to develop" or something along those lines. It is also important to be concise in any summaries or responses provided to management during meetings.

Academic staff

Academic staff can provide information on the extent to which various quality initiatives impact their work and speak to the amount of support they receive for their teaching and research, including adopting new technologies. It may also be helpful to ask academic staff how key data are communicated to them, and what changes they have seen in response to changing policies at the programme level. In interviews with academic staff, it is particularly important that Team Members refrain from voicing their own opinion on the information that was gathered or saying something that can be interpreted as criticism of the University or the Department.

Administrative staff/Professional Services

As part of the visit, the Team will meet with administrative staff responsible for a variety of functions. Some examples of fairly general questions to ask this group may include: Are students and front-line academic staff sufficiently supported by the resources available to them? Are there recurring themes emerging from conversations with students in Sport Science? Are there any special provisions for students in Sport Science?

Students

Students need to be assured at the beginning of each interview that all their responses will be kept confidential. The Team should also give students plenty of time to introduce themselves at the beginning of the meeting in order to "break the ice." Students are ideal sources of evidence for student engagement in internal quality insurance, what information and feedback they receive from the programme, and how programme staff responds to student feedback on a variety of issues (course evaluations, student association feedback, support to student association and representation, etc.).

Sport and Exercise Science Stakeholders

Examples of stakeholders include representatives of Sport associations in Iceland and other users of knowledge that is created in the Department through research and scholarship. These would also be good groups with whom to discuss the relevance and impact of the research and scholarship conducted in Sport Science; stakeholder engagement nationally and regionally; the quality of graduates; and to ask for evidence of successful partnerships with the University, including students. The list of stakeholders to be interviewed would be agreed beforehand between the Department and the Review Team.

<p align="center">***</p>

The Review Team and representatives of the Department of Sport and Exercise Science will be in regular contact leading up to the visit, and the Team Chair and Team Secretary will be in regular contact with designated representatives of the Department during the visit. Through these regular opportunities for dialogue, the Team will be able to get a general sense of its progress, and how well it is engaging with staff, students and stakeholders.

APPENDIX VIII: TEAM SCRIPT FOR ONLINE REVIEW MEETINGS[16]

A. Contact information

In case of bandwidth or internet access problems during the meeting, please text or call NAME at (+354) CELL NUMBER.

B. Meeting information

Meeting #:	X
Chair:	INITIALS
Meeting with:	INDIVIDUAL/BODY
Date:	DATE
Icelandic Time:	TIME
Member 1 Time:	TIME
Member 2 Time:	TIME
Member 3 Time:	TIME
Member 4 Time:	TIME
Attending:	ATTENDEE 1 NAME
	ATTENDEE 2 NAME
	ATTENDEE 3 NAME
	ATTENDEE 4 NAME
	…

C. Zoom information

Link:	Link
Zoom meeting ID:	ID
Zoom passcode:	PASSCODE

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[16] Yellow highlight indicates text that is to be changed so as to include relevant information for each individual meeting.

D. Script for starting meeting

- Introductions are not necessary
- This meeting is hosted by the Quality Board, not the university
- The session is not recorded, and the Zoom chat is not saved
- The Team takes notes, but no responses are linked to individuals or small groups

E. General comments/observations from attendees, not related to listed questions

- ...
- ...

F. Questions to be asked

Question 1: TEXT?
- Asked by: INITIALS
- Notes on Response to Question 1:

Question 2: TEXT?
- Asked by: INITIALS
- Notes on Response to Question 2:

Question 3: TEXT?
- Asked by: INITIALS
- Notes on Response to Question 3:

...

APPENDIX IX: INFORMATION SHEET FOR MEETING ATTENDEES FOR ONLINE REVIEW MEETINGS[17]

A. Contact information

In case of bandwidth or internet access problems during the meeting, please text or call NAME at (+354) CELL NUMBER.

B. Meeting information

Meeting #:	X
Chair:	INITIALS
Meeting with:	INDIVIDUAL/BODY
Date:	DATE
Icelandic Time:	TIME
Member 1 Time:	TIME
Member 2 Time:	TIME
Member 3 Time:	TIME
Member 4 Time:	TIME

C. Zoom information
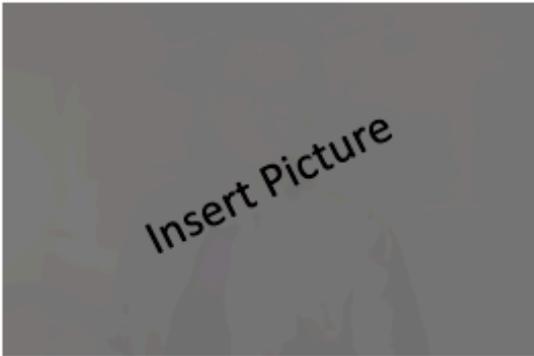
Link:	Link
Zoom meeting ID:	ID
Zoom passcode:	PASSCODE

PLEASE REFER TO
VIRTUAL VISIT MEETING GUIDELINES
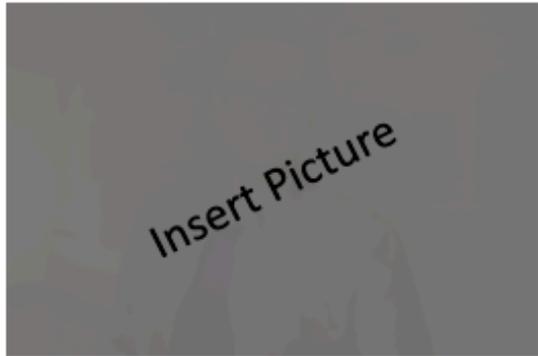**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE MEETING PROCESS**

PLEASE FIND BELOW AN INTRODUCTION TO REVIEW TEAM MEMBERS

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[17] Yellow highlight indicates text that is to be changed so as to include relevant information for each individual meeting

Name, Chair
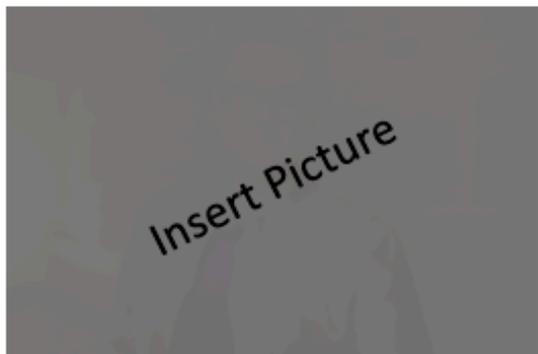**-Position, Institution**

Name, Secretary
-Position, Institution

Name, Student Member
-**Position, Institution**

Name
-**Position, Institution**

Name
-**Position, Institution**

Name
-**Position, Institution**

Virtual Visit Meeting Guidelines

The Review Team is pleased to have the opportunity to meet with representatives of your University, albeit virtually. As we enter into our meetings, we want to review the process for our discussions.

Using Zoom™

- In case of any problems accessing a meeting, call or email Sigurður Óli at 897-8935/secretariat@qef.is.
- Please keep your microphone muted if you are not talking to reduce background noise.
- If you need to step away from the conversation for a period of time, please turn off your video and mute your audio.
- If you have issues with bandwidth and Zoom audio, consider using your phone as a Wi-Fi hotspot (if possible).
- As with a campus visit, these sessions are your time with the visiting team, and they are not being recorded nor are the chat transcripts kept. While members of the team may take notes to remember the conversation, the source of all information shared is considered strictly confidential and no one will be identified by name in the report.
- We ask that meeting attendees do not share a web camera. That is, there should be only one attendee per one web camera.

Meeting Process

- Given the limited time for each session, we will not introduce ourselves. You have been provided a list of the team members with our credentials and we ask that you refer to this document.
- We will not ask you to introduce yourselves. We will still be able to know your name, as it appears in your Zoom window. We have the names and titles of all university representatives attending each meeting.
- A member of the Team has been designated as the lead for each of our meetings. This person will guide the question and answers.
- Questions will be directed at a specific participant(s) in the meeting. If you feel like you are not the best person to answer a question, then please suggest who in this meeting would be better placed to answer the question.
- We have limited time to go through a lot of material. We would appreciate you being brief in your responses and we may interrupt you to get to a new question in the interest of time.
- Should you wish to add to the response, please raise your hand to be recognized because we will not be monitoring the chat function during the meeting.
- Again, because time is limited, we ask for your understanding if we are not able to respond to everyone's desire to add to a particular response.
- It is possible that you will not be asked a question even though you have been invited to the meeting. That is because we are not always sure who is the best person to talk about a given topic, so we invited more people than not.

Through this review, both the university and the Team have responsibilities to commit to an enhancement approach, that involves trust and an open dialogue. This is a peer review process and with a focus on qualitative rather than quantitative assessment. We look forward to learning more over the coming week.

APPENDIX XI: SPECIFIC ROLES OF THE CHAIR, TEAM SECRETARY AND BOARD SECRETARIAT

This Appendix describes the role of the Team Chair, the Team Secretary and the Board Secretariat in case of a face-to-face visit. Minor adjustments, not described below, will be required if the visit is virtual.

Before the site visit, the Chair, in discussions with the team, will decide whether the Application provides an appropriate basis to support the review. The Review Chair will lead an electronic discussion (email, skype, etc.) of the Application before the visit, receive requests for more information or material from Team members, and communicate those requests to the Department through the Team Secretary. Responses to these requests will be fed back, as appropriate, to the Team members. The Chair will develop with the Department a programme of meetings for the site visit. The Chair will lead discussions on the responsibility for chairing meetings and collecting bullet points for different sections of the report.

During the visit, the Chair will provide oversight of and co-ordinate all meetings, maintain open communications with the institutional contact regarding the progress of the review, and (along with the Team Secretary) maintain good communications and cordial relationships within the Team and with the Department. The Chair will also ensure that, immediately after each meeting, the key or 'bullet' points are noted down, as a rapid *aide-memoire* before the full record is available. The Chair will also ensure that key issues that arise in meetings are covered in subsequent meetings if further information (or confirmation of facts or opinions) is needed. At the beginning of each day, the Chair will convene a meeting of the Team to review the programme, and at the end of the day to review the progress made that day. At the conclusion of the visit, the Chair will agree with the Team a full draft of the Headline Outcomes, and the timetable and individual responsibilities for the completion of the report.

After the visit, the Chair (along with the Team Secretary) will ensure that the Team completes the work of the report to the agreed schedule and to professional standards and will then sign off the full draft report with the agreement of the team. The Chair will also lead and coordinate the response of the Team to the Department's response to the draft report and sign off the final report for transmission to the Board on behalf of the Team.

During the site visit, the Team Secretary manages secretarial functions, records minutes, and keeps notes of key points to be confirmed with the Team. As the visit proceeds, the Team Secretary will discuss with the Department, usually at the end of each day, any issue related to logistics that has arisen during the course of the review.

Following the visit, the Team Secretary writes the draft report and assists the Chair in ensuring that the Team completes the work on the report to the agreed schedule and to professional standards and by coordinating the response of the Team to the university's response to the draft report.

The Board Secretariat is available to assist the Review Team throughout the review process but is not part of the Review Team.

APPENDIX XII: SUGGESTED TIMELINE FOR PREPARING REVIEW REPORT

Below is a suggested timeline for preparing the Review Report following the onsite or online meetings. Week 1 is the week of the review.

Week 2: Headline Outcomes developed
Team Secretary writes the headline outcomes of the review together with the Team's provisional recommendation. Draft is circulated to the Team and finalised.

Weeks 4-5: Drafting the report
Team Secretary writes the first draft of the report and circulates it to the Team for comments.

Weeks 6-7: Comments on the draft are due
Team reviews Draft 1.

Weeks 7-8: Revising the Draft
Team Secretary prepares Draft 2 of the Report and circulates it to the team.

Weeks 8-10: Draft Report proofread
Draft 2 is proofread by an external expert and sent to Team Secretary, who finalises a draft for fact checking.

Week 11: Draft Report to Rector of University, with Chair of the Department in cc
Team Secretary sends the Report to the Rector. The institution will be invited to identify factual inaccuracies, and/or misunderstandings arising from factual inaccuracy. The draft Report is confidential and may have a limited circulation internally, but no distribution externally.

Week 13: Institution's comments
Institution sends comments on draft Report.

Week 14: Draft 3 Report is prepared in the light of the Institution's comments
The Team Secretary, in consultation with the Chair, prepares Draft 3 Report in the light of comments received.

Week 16: Draft 3 Report sign-off by Team Chair
Draft 3 Report is finalised and signed off by the Review Team Chair for transmission to the Quality Board and copied to the Rector. At this stage Draft 3 Report is still confidential.

Week 18 or next scheduled meeting of Board: Meeting of Board to and finalise Report
The Board will meet to consider and finalise the Report.

Week 19, or one week after the meeting of the Board: Copy of Final Report sent to Ministry, with Rector of the University in cc
A copy of the final version will be sent to Ministry, with Rector in cc. Nothing appears in the public domain until the Review Summary is published by the Board (see next step). Publication of the full report is at the discretion of Ministry.

Week 21, or three weeks after meeting of the Board: Publication of Review Summary
Summary of report will be posted and a public announcement of publication made.

APPENDIX XIII: LOGISTICS, TRAVEL, HONORARIUM AND EXPENSES

In case of an onsite review, the following will apply to travel and expenses:

- The Secretariat will arrange for and cover air travel and hotel accommodation and obtain preferred travel arrangements prior to booking. If members want to stay extra nights before or after the visit, they are welcome to do so. Accommodation for the extra days would be at their own cost, but the Secretariat would strive to arrange discounted rates for any additional nights.

- Team members will receive a *per diem* for travel days and days in Iceland. The Secretariat will also reimburse ground travel to and from home airport and arrange for (or reimburse) ground travel in Iceland associated with the site visit. The per diem and any reimbursements will be paid once the Secretariat receives receipts for ground travel.

Whether the review is conducted online or onsite, the honorarium will be paid once the report is published.