



Report 2008:4 R

National quality assurance
system for the period
2007–2012

Revised 11 December 2007



Swedish National Agency for Higher Education • Luntmakargatan 13 • Box 7851, 103 99
Stockholm • tel. +46 8 563 085 00 • fax +46 8 563 085 50 • e-mail hsv@hsv.se • www.hsv.se

National quality assurance system for the period 2007– 2012

Published by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education 2008

Högskoleverkets rapportserie 2008:4 R

Contents: National Agency's Evaluation Department, **Clas-Uno Frykholm**

Graphic design: National Agency Information Department

Printed by: National Agency, Stockholm, April 2008

Printed on environmentally certified paper

Content

Foreword	5
Background and premises	7
Background	7
International developments	8
The need for changes	8
Summary – points of departure for the new system	9
The structure of the quality assurance system	11
Audits of quality procedures at the higher education institutions	11
Programme evaluations	13
Appraisal of entitlement to award degrees	15
Thematic evaluations and thematic studies	16
Centres of excellent quality in higher education	17
The aims of the system and its inherent structure	18
Implementing the quality assurance system	21
Timetable	21
Follow-up	22
Appendices	25
Appendix 1: Basic principles for the evaluation of the quality assurance procedures of the higher education institutions	25
Appendix 2: Aspects and criteria for the programme evaluations	27
Appendix 3: Aspects and criteria for the appraisal of entitlement to award degrees	28
Appendix 4: The new degree ordinance	30
Appendix 5: Key ratios in programme evaluations for general degrees and professional qualifications	34
Appendix 6: Timetable for quality assurance audits	35
Appendix 7: Timetable for programme evaluations	37
Appendix 8: Aspects and criteria for the appraisal of centres of excellent quality in higher education	40
Appendix 9: Preliminary timetable for the selection process for centres of excellent quality in higher education	41

Foreword

This document presents the first revised version of the quality assurance system for the review and evaluation of higher education during six-year period, 2007–2012.

This system has been developed by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education's evaluation department in consultation with the institutions and agencies concerned. The report begins with a presentation of the background of the new programme and the premises on which it is based. This is followed by a survey of how the system is organised, the components of which it will consist and how they are related to each other. Finally there is a brief description of how it is to be implemented and followed up.

The appendices present the aspects and criteria that will be applied during the evaluations as well as plans for the implementation of the system.

The programme has been supplemented by descriptions of procedures and instructions for assessors and higher education institutions. The programme will also be subject to continual monitoring and review during the six-year period. All the documents will be published on the National Agency's web-site.

We hope that this programme will contribute to the enhancement of the quality of higher education and stimulate active and creative improvement work at all of the higher education institutions.

Anders Flodström

Clas-Uno Frykholm

Background and premises

In developing the new quality assurance system, our ambition has been to combine experiences of the previous system with new ideas about quality assurance and quality development that have emerged recently in various national and international contexts. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education has also listened to and included the views of the Ministry of Education and Research, higher education institutions, student organisations and other stakeholders. It goes without saying that the new degree ordinance developed as a result of the Bologna Process been one important point of departure, as have the “standards and guidelines” developed by ENQA.¹

Background

The focus of the previous quality assurance system was on the evaluation of subjects and programmes and assessments of entitlement to award degrees, supplemented by thematic evaluations. Both the evaluations of subjects and programmes and assessments of entitlement to award degrees aimed mainly to assure fundamental quality, while the thematic evaluations focused on describing various quality aspects and highlighting good examples of successful quality procedures.

In many ways the quality assurance system worked well. Subject and programme evaluations provided a good national picture of quality in various educational areas, while at the same time programmes that did not maintain sound standards were identified and warned of the possible withdrawal of their entitlement to award degrees. All of the programmes evaluated received feed-back in the form of recommendations and proposed measures to enhance their quality.

The follow up organised after three years showed that nearly all the recommendations had been taken into account and that quality had improved.² Experiences were similar from the assessments of entitlement to award degrees, where the shortcomings identified were usually remedied before another application was submitted. The thematic evaluations have served to provide a platform of knowledge and a source of inspiration for development in important areas.

1. *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.* ENQA report. ISBN: 952-5539-04-0; ISSN: 1458-1051

2. Uppföljning av Högskoleverkets ämnes- och programutvärderingar år 2000 och 2001. Högskoleverkets rapportserie 2006:25 R

International developments

Within the framework of the Bologna process the ministers of education in the affiliated countries have agreed on certain joint guidelines for the evaluation and quality assurance of higher education.³ These include for instance:

- external evaluation of the quality procedures of the higher education institutions,
- regular appraisals of subjects and programmes,
- official approval, accreditation or certification of programmes,
- a methodology based on self-evaluation and external appraisal,
- the participation of students, subject experts and international assessors,
- international cooperation and accreditation of the national quality assurance agencies.

Where the first three points are concerned “ENQA’s standards and guidelines” state that one or some of these three components may be included in the quality assurance system, but no standpoint is adopted about how many or which of them. The document also states that the progress made by the higher education institutions themselves should be considered when designing national quality assurance systems. If the internal quality assurance procedures at an institution are well developed, external appraisal may be reduced correspondingly.

From an international perspective, Sweden has made a great deal of progress where the quality assurance of higher education is concerned. For some considerable time the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education has fulfilled the requirements in the “standards and guidelines”, which was confirmed by the external evaluation of its quality appraisal activities that took place during the autumn of 2005.⁴

The need for changes

The follow-up undertaken by the National Agency has revealed that the previous system worked well, but even so there were reasons for making changes before starting the next round of evaluations. The most important reason for making changes is linked to a shift of emphasis where responsibility for quality assurance is concerned. As a result of the large number of national subject and programme evaluations that have been made, the higher education institutions are now much better equipped than they were to assume the responsibility for their own quality assurance and quality development. Increasing the responsibility of the higher education institutions themselves also coincides with international developments.

3. See the report referred to in footnote 1.

4. Evaluation of National Agency for Higher Education, Sweden, According to Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. December 2005. Reg. no. 643-1440-05

Greater responsibility for the higher education institutions means that the National Agency's external evaluations of the quality of subjects and programmes need not be as extensive. At the same time the state must be able to guarantee that reasonable minimum standards are being maintained in all higher education. This can be achieved by undertaking a smaller number of in-depth evaluations of subjects and programmes after an assessment of "the risk of failure to maintain good standards" based on key statistics, monitoring and simplified self-evaluations.⁵ There is also a greater need for international participation in the evaluations. It is important to broaden perspectives and compare Swedish quality evaluations with those conducted in other countries. This means that certain evaluations should be carried out using English as the working language.

There are also grounds for focusing greater attention than before on activities that maintain very high standards. The National Agency therefore wants to try to provide greater stimulation of local quality procedures by establishing a distinction for centres of excellent quality in higher education.

Summary – points of departure for the new system

The points of departure for the new system are

- greater emphasis on the quality procedures of the higher education institutions themselves,
- external quality appraisal based on risk assessment,
- a greater degree of international participation in the evaluations,
- distinction to centres of excellent quality in higher education.

5. It should be pointed out that programmes can also be selected for in-depth evaluation for other reasons.

The structure of the quality assurance system

The new quality assurance system is made up of five different components that interact with and support each other. These are

- audits of the quality procedures at the higher education institutions,
- programme evaluations,
- appraisal of entitlement to award degrees,
- thematic evaluations and thematic studies,
- distinction to centres of excellent quality in higher education.

A brief survey of the various components is offered below.

Audits of quality procedures at the higher education institutions

Two rounds of audits of quality procedures at the higher education institutions have previously been carried out during the years 1995–2002. The earlier audits took place at a time when the institutions were in the process of developing their own systems for quality assurance and quality development. The audits focused on development and were based on a vision of “the good higher education institution”. To a large extent they concentrated on central functions and the appraisal of systems as they were formulated in plans and documentation.

It is now assumed that these systems have been developed and that they have functioned for some time, which means that the impending audits can focus more on the outcomes and effects of the quality procedures at the higher education institutions.

In order to determine how well grounded the quality procedures of the higher education institutions are in operation and how they are conducted in practice, the audits will also comprise faculty and departmental levels. At each higher education institution two to six areas will be selected for in-depth study. These areas may be organisational units, such as departments, centres of different kinds or other units that provide teaching at first, second or third level, a programme, a major discipline/subject or a setting in which first, second and/or third level teaching is offered. Libraries, IT support and other administrative units will not be selected for in-depth study but it is important for the panels of assessors to meet representatives of these environments during their site visits. Settings in which only research takes place will not be selected for in-depth study.

The audits will be based on the self-evaluations of the higher education institutions, quality procedure plans, follow-ups, evaluations and other material requested by the panel of assessors. The areas selected for in-depth studies will also be asked to submit a brief account of how their quality assurance procedures are organised and how they relate to the overall quality assurance measures at the higher education institution.⁶

Quality assurance procedures will be assessed on the basis of the seven aspects recommended in ENQA's *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*.⁷ The general aspects of quality will be appraised not merely on the basis of plans and documentation but also on how they are integrated, implemented and monitored in day-to-day operations. The audits will focus on the outcomes of the quality assurance procedures.

Every higher education institution will be audited during a six-year cycle. Institutions where circumstances are similar will be audited in the same year.⁸ The methodology used for the audits will resemble that adopted previously, with panels of external assessors, self-evaluation, site visits and written reports.

The panels of assessors will draw up a final report describing and evaluating the quality procedures at all higher education institutions that have been audited during a specific year. The final report will contain a general section in which shared strengths and weaknesses in the quality procedures will be specified and analysed. The report will also contain specific feed-back for the individual institutions and recommendations and proposed measures for improvement.

The National Agency will base its analysis and reflections on the assessors' report and this will result in a decision in which the University Chancellor will make one of the following assessments: *The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education has confidence in ...* ; *The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education has limited confidence in ...* ; *The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education has no confidence in ... quality assurance procedures at the higher education institution*. The National Agency's assessment of this confidence will be based on an overall appraisal guided by assessment of the various aspects.

The expression by the National Agency of confidence in the quality assurance procedures of a higher education institution means that it has a system that functions well, but even systems of this kind *can* be improved.

Limited confidence in the quality procedures of a higher education institution from the National Agency means that there are aspects of these proce-

6. Instructions about self-evaluations for the quality audits of the higher education institutions can be found on the National Agency's web-site.

7. The criteria on which quality audits will be based can be found in Appendix 1.

8. The six-year plan for audits of the higher education institutions' quality procedures can be found in Appendix 6.

dures that function well but that the Agency considers there are certain areas that *should* be improved.

In those cases where the National Agency has no confidence in the quality procedures of a higher education institution it has found such serious shortcomings that they must be dealt with. The higher education institution will then be given one year to remedy the shortcomings specified.

Programme evaluations

In the new organisation of the evaluations of programmes appraisal will take place in three stages. Initially the National Agency will compile an overall national survey of the major subject areas that describes the programmes to be evaluated in any given year.

In the next stage, *a selection* of individual programmes will be made on the basis of these surveys. This selection will be based on self-evaluations, key statistics and other factual material. Programmes which this material indicates may run the risk of failing to maintain sound quality will always be selected for in-depth evaluation. The choice may also be made for other reasons, for instance a programme may have an interesting focus, be innovative or an example of good practice. The decision to conduct an in-depth evaluation is made by the University Chancellor on the basis of a report presented by the project administrator responsible.

The third stage means that the programmes selected will undergo in-depth appraisals.

Programme evaluations will also take place in the future in accordance with a six-year plan. Changes have been made in the six-year plan to coordinate the appraisal of programmes in related subject areas, which will make it easier to provide national surveys of the major disciplines. At the same time this will offer greater possibility of assessing programmes in a broad subject area on the same terms. It should also offer the possibility of synergy benefits for the higher education institutions as there will be a more concentrated focus on the faculties concerned for a limited period of time.⁹

The overall appraisal and the production of the national surveys will, as during the previous round of evaluations, cover all major areas and programmes that lead to the award of at least a bachelor's degree, a bachelor's degree in the field of arts or a professional qualification. This means that all the degrees in the new degree ordinance, apart from university diplomas, will be evaluated.

One important aim of the national surveys is to provide information about the educational areas evaluated: where programmes are offered in Sweden; what profiles they adopt; how many undergraduate and graduate students there are at the different institutions; the number of teachers and their qualifi-

9. The six-year plan for the programme evaluations can be found in Appendix 7.

cations; resources and infrastructure; other factors that significantly affect the programmes and a general impression of the quality of what is offered.

The national surveys will be produced by analysts at the National Agency, who will co-opt subject experts for the task of appraising programme-specific issues. The national surveys will be based on data, key statistics and simplified self-evaluations. Web-based questionnaires addressed to different stakeholders, for instance students and teachers, will also be used. On the other hand no site visits will take place during this stage. It is only the programmes selected for in-depth evaluation that will receive site-visits.

What a simplified self-evaluation implies is made clear by the *Instructions for simplified self-evaluation* that have been drawn up by the National Agency. The simplification consists of a reduction of the number of aspects to be reviewed and removal of the requirement that every quality aspect has to be analysed. On the other hand considerably more quantitative information will be required in the self-evaluations than during the last six-year cycle. In their self-evaluations the programmes evaluated will have to compile certain statistical information about their teaching staff, students, degree projects, research students and degrees awarded in third level programmes. If possible, data has to be provided for a five-year period. In addition current syllabuses and curricula must be attached.¹⁰

On the basis of the quantitative data the National Agency will produce the key-statistics to be presented in the national surveys. The key-statistics will describe teaching resources, teachers' qualifications, resources for supervision, performance level and the proportion of permanently appointed teachers in undergraduate programmes as well as the qualifications of the supervisors and throughput in third level programmes.¹¹

The simplified self-evaluations with their appendices will also provide the basis for the in-depth evaluations. These will adopt methods similar to the current evaluations of subjects and programmes, with panels of external assessors and site-visits. Before the in-depth evaluations take place, the panels of assessors will be able to request supplementary material to cover any gaps in the data supplied.

The aspects and criteria for the evaluation of the quality of programmes are worded in general terms and intended to specify the areas and the general standards that programmes are expected to attain.¹² Before every evaluation these will be reformulated in concrete terms on the basis of the programmes involved. This will be the task of the experts in the panels of assessors appointed for each evaluation. They alone have the expertise and the insights required.

10. Instructions for the self-evaluations for programme evaluations can be found on the National Agency's web-site.

11. Definitions of the key statistics and the basis on which they are calculated can be found in Appendix 5. Corresponding key statistics for programmes in the fine arts will be produced in collaboration with the higher education institutions concerned by 2010 at the latest.

12. The aspects and criteria for programme evaluations can be found in Appendix 2.

Their guidelines will be provided by the new degree ordinance and the learning outcomes drawn up in the framework of the Bologna agreement.¹³

Just as in the earlier system, the panels of assessors will submit their opinion in reports on which the National Agency will base any decisions it makes. In cases where the in-depth evaluation reveals quality shortcomings of a serious nature, the National Agency will also question the entitlement of the higher education institution to award a degree. The institution will then have one year in which to remedy the shortcomings indicated. Unless sufficient measures have been taken the institution's entitlement to award the degree will be withdrawn.¹⁴

Appraisal of entitlement to award degrees

Appraisal of entitlement to award degrees will continue to be an important element in the quality assurance system. Higher education institutions applying for entitlement to award professional qualifications are appraised by the National Agency, which also decides in each case. Independent course providers apply to the Government, upon which the National Agency appraises the application and recommends a decision. The Government has also given the National Agency the task of making appraisals of applications for areas of research or for university status on which the Government can base its decisions.¹⁵

A new degree ordinance came into force on 1 July 2007. As a consequence of the Bologna process general degrees will be awarded at three levels: first level (diplomas and bachelor's degrees), second level (Degree of Master One Year, and Degree of Master, Two Years) and also third level (licentiate degrees and PhD's). Corresponding degrees have been introduced for programmes in the fine arts.

The National Agency has formulated the aspects and criteria on which appraisal of entitlement to award degrees will be based. These criteria are general ones. The concrete criteria that will apply for each specific appraisal must be determined by the panel of assessors appointed. The descriptions of learning outcomes in the new degree ordinance are to provide the guidelines for this task.¹⁶

Higher education institutions that are not entitled to award third level degrees must be appraised for the entitlement to award a Degree of Master

13. A survey of the differences between bachelor's and the various master's degrees in the new degree ordinance is provided in Appendix 4.

14. The National Agency is itself entitled to withdraw entitlement to award degrees at basic and advanced level. The Agency has also expressed a desire for this to apply to degrees at graduate level as well.

15. Instructions for applications for entitlement to award degrees can be found on the National Agency's web-site.

16. Aspect and criteria for appraisal of the entitlement to award degrees can be found in Appendix 3.

(Two Years) in these subject areas. The National Agency has drawn up instructions for applications for entitlement to award these degrees and the quality aspects and criteria on which such appraisals will be based.¹⁷

Programmes leading to the award of a Degree of Master (Two Years) are to have a specific focus to be determined by each higher education institution itself and comprise advanced study within a major field of study. The ordinance also states that the National Agency is to ascertain whether the quality and extent of the academic environment in the field is adequate to enable the institution to offer a programme with close links to third level programmes.

The method used for appraisals of entitlement to award degrees will resemble an in-depth programme evaluation, with a panel of external assessors, a site visit, expert opinion and a decision by the University Chancellor. The applications are to specify the degree title desired in the form of a pre-determiner or post-determiner that indicates the area of specialisation. These applications will be appraised continuously as and when they are submitted. Applications submitted by 15 October will, if possible, be appraised during the same academic year.

Thematic evaluations and thematic studies

In order to shed light on more general aspects of quality, the National Agency has undertaken a number of thematic evaluations of areas that are central to quality in higher education. The themes studied so far are gender equality, student influence, diversity, cooperation with the surrounding community, internationalisation as well as the support services offered to students by the higher education institutions.

The aim of these evaluations has been to provide a national overview of how certain aspects of quality are being dealt with. This kind of national perspective, where the operations of all the higher education institutions are studied at the same time, also enables comparisons to be made and examples of good practice to be highlighted. These evaluations are meant to provide inspiration and spur other institutions to improve quality.

The experiences from the thematic evaluations have been positive and they should continue. However, these evaluations have provided surveys and their emphasis has been on describing and appraising rather than on probing, analysing and explaining.

We see an increasing need of thematic studies that are intended to produce in-depth knowledge about various phenomena in higher education in Sweden. Three thematic studies of this kind have been made, in which external researchers have been engaged to cooperate with the National Agency in

17. Instructions on applications for entitlement to award master's degrees and how the assessors appointed are to formulate aspects and criteria in concrete terms can be found in the Swedish National Agency's report *Prövning av masterexamen* 2007, Högskolverkets rapportserie Rapport 2007:46 R. These instructions can also be found on the Agency's web-site.

studying issues that play an important role for the quality of programmes. Within the framework of these projects different forms of examination and degree projects were compared and also the links with research in various programmes at different higher education institutions. There are many examples of other areas that would be interesting subjects for similar studies. Currently there is one study under way about the working conditions of academic teachers and academic governance and one on entrance qualifications and the standards required in higher education.

Thematic studies should be regarded as an integrated aspect of the quality assurance system in which the results of evaluations of higher education institutions or of programmes can be probed into more deeply. Thematic studies can also be initiated in other ways, for instance issues can be raised by the Ministry, the higher education institutions, students, future employers or other stakeholders.

Centres of excellent quality in higher education

So far, most of the components of the system that have been described are intended to monitor quality with a focus on the lowest acceptable levels. There are few incentives for educational organisations that already maintain high standards to seek further improvement. This is the main motive for the introduction of a distinction for centres of excellent educational quality.

Distinction of centres of excellent quality in higher education at national level is new for Sweden, although awards of this kind exist in several other Nordic and European countries, among them Norway, Finland and England.

The aim of distinguishing centres of excellent quality in higher education is to stimulate quality enhancement and to inspire others by offering examples of good practice. One important element in this – possibly more important than the award itself – is the process initiated at higher education institution level and the thorough analysis of its operations in the preparation of the application. The feed-back from the panel of external assessors and the positive publicity that results from the award of the distinction are, of course, also important.

Applications are voluntary and the higher education institutions themselves decide which educational organisations they want to nominate as particularly excellent. These may be units, departments, sections, centres or organisational collaboration between different units. They may be offering programmes at first level, second level or third level.

The educational organisations that apply for the distinction will have to submit a report that offers a convincing description and analysis of how they operate and how this benefits student learning. They must also provide convincing evidence of their results and the way in which these results are particularly outstanding. To provide guidance, the National Agency has listed a

number of aspects on which appraisal will be based.¹⁸ In order not to restrict the opportunity to apply for the distinction in advance, the National Agency has opted to specify these at a general level. The Agency assumes that a centre of excellent quality in higher education will have local learning outcomes and clearly formulated criteria for their attainment. In addition to the general aspects, the higher education institutions must also account for and analyse their own circumstances and the criteria for and attainment of the centre's local learning outcomes.

Evaluation will be carried out by panels of highly qualified, international experts who are particularly familiar with issues relating to centres of excellent quality in higher education. Site visits will be made to the organisations that can be considered to have any chance of being awarded the distinction on the basis of their applications. The requirements for the award of the distinction will be very stringent. We expect that only a few organisations are likely to be considered for this award each year.

The aims of the system and its inherent structure

Overall aims

The quality assurance system is intended to function as a coherent system in which the various components interact with and support each other.

The National Agency's evaluations will continue to have three main aims—monitoring, development and information – but different emphasis will be given to each of these aims in the various elements of the system.

The audits of the quality procedures at the higher education institutions, which have previously focused on development, will now also contain an element of assessment with predetermined aspects and evaluation criteria. The national survey produced during the programme evaluations will mainly be for information purposes, whereas the in-depth evaluations will focus more on inspection. There has always been an explicit assessment aspect to the appraisals of the entitlement to award degrees but indirectly they offer strong incentives for development when quality requirements are not fulfilled. The thematic studies have primarily been intended to provide information but indirectly they lead to quality improvement. The development aspect can most clearly be seen in the distinction of centres of educational excellence.

Extent and emphases

The extent of the various components varies. Programme evaluations – which in their previous form (evaluations of subjects and programmes) occupied about 80 per cent of the time, energy and resources allocated by the National Agency to evaluation – will be reduced to about half, but will remain the

18. Aspects and criteria for appraisal of centres of excellent quality in higher education are listed in Appendix 8.

largest component in the new system. The scope that this will then allow will be used among other things for auditing the quality procedures of the higher education institutions, which we calculate will require about 30 per cent of our resources. About 15 per cent of the resources will be allocated to appraisal of entitlement to award degrees,¹⁹ while 10 per cent will be available for thematic studies. The selection of centres of educational excellence will be the smallest component in the system. Initially we calculate that about 5 per cent of our resources will be required for this purpose.

Interaction between different components

Certain synergies can be attained from the interaction of different components in the system. There may be advantages to reviewing more general quality aspects such as gender equality, educational breadth, cooperation with the surrounding community and internationalisation during the audits of the higher education institutions' quality procedures or in thematic evaluations. Governance and leadership issues, which are central in institutional audits, may provide help in understanding the findings of programme evaluations.

In cases where the programme evaluations reveal that it has not been possible to maintain good standards at a certain institution, it will be possible during institutional audits to raise questions about whether this has been discovered by the institution's own quality assurance system and, if so, what measures this has prompted from the institution. Correspondingly, it will be possible to see if there is any link between centres of excellent quality and sound quality procedures. Thematic studies can shed light on and advance our knowledge about various phenomena and results revealed by other evaluations.

One ambition in the new quality assurance system is to acquire greater understanding of the prevailing circumstances in which quality measures are undertaken, what processes are involved and what results are achieved.

19. To begin with considerably more resources may be needed for this purpose if there is major inflow of applications for entitlement to award degree of master (two years), but we expect the situation to stabilise after one or two years.

Implementing the quality assurance system

Timetable

During the spring of 2007 the current quality assurance system has been gradually phased out while at the same time elements of the new system have been phased in.

Each year up to 2012 six to nine higher education institutions will be audited according to a predetermined plan. In this plan the institutions are divided up so that those with similar circumstances will be audited during the same year. The start-up meetings for the first round will take place in February 2008.²⁰

The programme evaluations will also be conducted according to a six-year plan. This has been structured to enable programmes with closely related content to be assessed in the same year. Coordinating programmes in the same areas during the different years can also help to provide some degree of readiness for the evaluation of the new, broader master's programmes which are likely to be created as a result of the new degree ordinance.²¹

The programme evaluations will begin with start-up meetings with the course providers concerned in the autumn of 2007. They will be followed by the institutions' self-evaluation processes, which will finish during the spring of 2008. Production of the first national surveys will take place during the autumn of 2008. This means that the first in-depth evaluations of programmes will begin in the spring of 2009, at the same time as the second round of national surveys are being produced. A complete evaluation of all programmes according to the new system will therefore not be complete before 2014.

The programme evaluations have been deferred to make room for the large number of applications for entitlement to award master's degrees that we expect to be submitted during the first two years of the period.

It should be noted here that a special evaluation of teacher-training programmes will be arranged as the result of an earlier decision. The evaluation of teacher-training programmes will use the old model with initial meetings taking place in February 2007, self-evaluations during the spring of 2007, site visits during the autumn of the same year and a report to be submitted in March 2008.

Applications for entitlement to award degrees will be appraised continuously as and when they are submitted.

Where the new types of thematic studies are concerned it has been pointed out above that the National Agency has already undertaken a few. In the

20. The six-year plan for the audits of the higher education institutions' quality procedures can be found in Appendix 6.

21. The six-year plan for the programme evaluations can be found in Appendix 7.

future, we expect to undertake one or two thematic studies every year. We will also conduct one or two thematic evaluations during the coming six-year period.

The first call for applications for the distinction of “Centre of excellent quality in higher education” was sent to all the higher education institutions in January 2007. Evaluation of the applications and site visits took place between May and October the same year. The first awards were made in January 2008. It is intended to repeat the same procedure annually during the coming six-year period. A decision will be made about the continuation of the award after 2012 after evaluation of the experiences of the first six-year period.²²

Initially there will be a small-scale test of reviews and evaluations where the working language is English. The first will be the appraisals of the applications for the distinction of centre of excellent quality in higher education. These applications are to be written in English.

The National Agency also expects to test the use of English as a working language in one or a few audits of the higher education institutions’ quality procedures. Some of the programme evaluations may also be conducted with English as the working language, probably not, however, during the first year when the new system is introduced.

The decision on which audits and evaluations are to be undertaken with English as the working language will be made in consultation with the higher education institutions involved.

Follow-up

Different forms of follow-up are important in all quality assurance systems. The National Agency will therefore continue to place great importance on follow-up. The higher education institutions that have taken part in audits of their quality procedures during a specific year will be invited to a feed-back conference about three months after the publication of the report. This will allow discussion of the audit process and of the final report. A great deal of attention will be paid to the judgements made and improvement measures proposed.

The purpose of the feed-back conferences is to acquire opinions from the higher education institutions that could lead to improvements in future audits and also to initiate discussion of how work with quality at the institutions can be improved.

Both the quality audits and the in-depth programme evaluations will be followed up after three years. This will take the form of questionnaires sent to the higher education institutions and the programmes concerned. The aim of the three-year follow-up is to find out how the institutions and the pro-

22. The timetable for the work with the distinction of Centres of excellent quality in higher education can be found in Appendix 9.

grammes have dealt with the recommendations of the panels of assessors and any measures they may have proposed.

In addition to the follow-up with the higher education institutions and the programmes evaluated, follow-up also takes place with the panels of assessors. Specific follow-up is also arranged with all the student representatives participating in panels during the year. This kind of follow-up is intended to provide continuous improvement of the National Agency's evaluations.

Finally, external reviews and evaluations of the National Agency's quality assurance system will be arranged. They are carried out by independent researchers and international assessment panels. These evaluations will also continue during the coming six-year period.

Appendices

Appendix I: Basic principles for the evaluation of the quality assurance procedures of the higher education institutions

The overall aim of quality assurance procedures is the development of a culture in which quality assurance is regarded as an important and natural element in the everyday operations of the higher education institution.

The assessment principles below cover all the aspects referred to in ENQA's *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*.

Self-evaluations must clearly account for the results of quality assurance procedures for each assessment principle.

1. Continuous quality assurance

The higher education institution must undertake active and continuous quality assurance procedures. In addition to an overall quality document there must also be at every level a document that describes the objectives of quality assurance procedures, how they are organised and the allocation of responsibilities, as well as strategies for ensuring that they are generally supported, implemented and followed up.

The document must also clearly show how the quality of operations is ensured and continually improved in collaboration with all concerned, including students.

Quality assurance procedures must lead to continuous operational improvement.

2. Systematic monitoring and revision of programmes

The higher education institution is to have a system with periodically recurring appraisals and revisions of all of its programmes. The aim of these appraisals is to validate the objectives, progression, quality and relevance in relation to the surrounding community and current research.

The system must also include strategies and criteria for the assurance of the quality of new programmes. The higher education institution must describe how new programmes are established, monitored and closed down.

3. Assessment and examination of students

All assessment of students and examinations must be based on the objectives laid down in the degree ordinance and those formulated locally (intended learning outcomes). Regulations, approaches and criteria for assessment and examination must be worded clearly and available to students.

All examination has to be conducted in a professional manner. This means that examination is to be individual, reliable and relevant and be based on generally accepted knowledge about assessment and grading.

Examinations are to be designed so that they can be considered to assess knowledge and also offer an opportunity to learn and develop.

4. The qualifications of staff and the opportunities offered for their enhancement

The higher education institution must ensure that all staff have the qualifications and skills required for the duties assigned to them.

Strategic plans must exist for the enhancement of the skills of the staff both in terms of their subject and teaching methodology. Information about the time allowed for teachers to conduct research within the framework of their posts must be available. Regular reviews are to be made of teaching resources and teachers' qualifications.

5. Learning environment, resources and support for students

The higher education institution must ensure that all teaching is offered in a learning environment in which students have access to appropriate premises, a library with up-to-date and relevant texts, as well as the technical equipment required.

Students must also have access to various forms of support, such as student counselling and other counselling or support staff.

There must be a system for continuous assessment and improvement of the learning environment and student support.

6. Collecting and use of key data and other information

Each organisational level of the higher education institution must systematically collect and analyse key data and other relevant information about its operations.

Examples of information that should be collected are data about the numbers of applicants per place, average period of study, the percentage awarded degrees and information about employment on graduation. Information about teaching resources and teachers' qualifications should also be collected and tabulated. Information should be presented in chronological series to enable the analysis of trends.

This information should form the basis of decisions about future activities.

7. Information for the general public

The higher education institution must regularly compile and publish information on the programmes offered.

These publications must contain current information on the contents of programmes, teaching and examination as well as other information that is important for students when selecting programmes. The information should be objective, correct and simple to understand.

Appendix 2: Aspects and criteria for the programme evaluations

Circumstantial factors

Teaching resources

- the number of permanently employed teachers and others is in proportion to the dimensions of the programme,
- the teachers have the academic, artistic, teaching and any other qualifications required to teach and offer supervision in the programme,
- the teachers will enjoy genuine opportunities to enhance their skills and carry out their own research/own artistic development work.

Educational setting

- the programme is offered in an environment in which research/artistic development is taking place,
- the programme provides the conditions to enable a critical and creative/reflective approach.

Infrastructure

- undergraduate and research students have good access to texts/other teaching materials, IT resources and other equipment that may be necessary.

Organisation of the programme

Regulatory documents

- the syllabuses contain learning objectives (intended learning outcomes) that have been formulated in accordance with the degree ordinance.

Teaching, reading lists and examinations

- teaching, reading lists and examinations are designed so that they ensure that there are links with research/artistic development and pro-gressivity.

Outcomes

Attainment of degree outcomes

- requirements are clearly documented, for instance in the form of grade criteria or the like, and are made explicit in instructions for examinations, degree projects and other forms of examination,
- the higher education institution can demonstrate that its undergraduate/graduate students attain the programme's objectives.

Quality assurance of the programme

- there is a quality assurance system to guarantee the future quality of the programme.

Appendix 3: Aspects and criteria for the appraisal of entitlement to award degrees

Circumstantial factors

Teaching resources

- the number of permanently employed and other teachers is in proportion to the estimated extent of the programme,
- the teachers have the academic, artistic, teaching and any other qualifications required to teach and offer supervision in the programme,
- teachers will enjoy genuine opportunities to enhance their skills and carry out their own research/artistic development work.

Educational setting

- the programme is offered in an environment in which research/artistic development is taking place,
- the programme provides the conditions to enable a critical and creative/reflective approach,
- the higher education institution is able to demonstrate how students studying for a master's degree (two years) will be involved in the research environment.

Infrastructure

- undergraduate and research students will have access to texts/other teaching materials, IT resources and other equipment that may be necessary.

Organisation of the programme

Regulatory documents

- the syllabuses contain learning objectives (intended learning outcomes) that have been formulated in accordance with the degree ordinance.

Teaching, reading lists and examinations

- teaching, reading lists/other teaching materials and examinations will be designed so that they ensure that there are links with research/artistic development and progressivity,
- teaching and examination for students in master's programmes (two years) will develop the ability to account for and discuss scientific issues in national and international contexts.

Outcomes

Assurance of degree outcomes

- requirements are clearly documented, for instance in the form of grade criteria or the like, and are made explicit in instructions for examinations, degree projects and other forms of examination,

- the higher education institution can show that the programme will provide undergraduate/graduate students with good possibilities of attaining the objectives of the programme.

Quality assurance of the programme

- there is a quality assurance system to guarantee the future quality of the programme.

Appendix 4: The new degree ordinance

The table below presents the differences between bachelor's degrees and the two different master's degrees laid down in the new degree ordinance. This appendix provides an example of how progression is stipulated for general degrees and the degrees in the fine arts. The specific requirements laid down for the various vocational qualifications can be found in appendix 2 of the Higher Education Ordinance.

General degrees

Total number of higher education credits and in-depth studies required

Degree of Bachelor (Kandidatexamen)	Degree of Master (One Year) (Magisterexamen)	Degree of Master (Two Years) (Masterexamen)
A Degree of Bachelor is obtained after the student has completed course requirements of 180 higher education credits with a certain area of specialisation determined by each higher education institution itself, including at least 90 higher education credits with increasingly in-depth studies in the main field of study.	A Degree of Master (One Year) is obtained after the student has completed course requirements of 60 higher education credits with a certain area of specialisation determined by each higher education institution itself, including at least 30 higher education credits with in-depth studies in the main field of study. In addition, the student must hold a Degree of Bachelor, a Degree of Bachelor of Arts in..., a professional degree worth at least 180 higher education credits or an equivalent foreign qualification.	A Degree of Master (Two Years) is obtained after the student has completed course requirements of 120 higher education credits with a certain area of specialisation determined by each higher education institution itself, including at least 60 higher education credits with in-depth studies in the main field of study. In addition, the student must hold a Degree of Bachelor, a Degree of Bachelor of Arts in..., a professional degree worth at least 180 higher education credits or an equivalent foreign qualification.
For a Degree of Bachelor students must have completed an independent project (degree project) worth at least 15 higher education credits in their main field of study, within the framework of the course requirements.	For a Degree of Master (One Year) students must have completed an independent project (degree project) worth at least 15 higher education credits in their main field of study, within the framework of the course requirements.	For a Degree of Master (Two Years) students must have completed an independent project (degree project) worth at least 30 higher education credits in their main field of study, within the framework of the course requirements. The independent project may comprise less than 30 higher education credits, but not less than 15 higher education credits, if the student has already completed an independent project at the second level worth at least 15 higher education credits in their main field of study, or an equivalent project in a foreign educational programme.

Degree objectives

For a Degree of Bachelor a student must	For a Degree of Master (One Year) a student must	For a Degree of Master (Two Years) a student must
<p><i>Knowledge and understanding</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate knowledge and understanding in their main field of study, including knowledge of the scientific basis of the field, knowledge of applicable methods in the field, in-depth knowledge of some part of the field and a general sense of current research issues. 	<p><i>Knowledge and understanding</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate knowledge and understanding in their main field of study, including both a broad command of the field and deeper knowledge of certain parts of the field, together with insight into current research and development work; and - demonstrate deeper methodological knowledge in their main field of study. 	<p><i>Knowledge and understanding</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate knowledge and understanding in their main field of study, including both broad knowledge in the field and substantially deeper knowledge of certain parts of the field, together with deeper insight into current research and development work; and - demonstrate deeper methodological knowledge in their main field of study.
<p><i>Skills and abilities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate an ability to seek, gather and critically interpret information that is relevant to a problem and to critically discuss phenomena, issues and situations; - demonstrate an ability to independently identify, formulate and solve problems and to perform tasks within specified time limits; - demonstrate an ability to present and discuss information, problems and solutions in dialogue with different groups, orally and in writing; and - demonstrate the skills required to work independently in the field that the education concerns. 	<p><i>Skills and abilities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate an ability to integrate knowledge and to analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations, even when limited information is available; - demonstrate an ability to independently identify and formulate issues and to plan and, using appropriate methods, carry out advanced tasks within specified time limits; - demonstrate an ability to clearly present and discuss their conclusions and the knowledge and arguments behind them, in dialogue with different groups, orally and in writing; and - demonstrate the skill required to participate in research and development work or to work in other advanced contexts. 	<p><i>Skills and abilities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate an ability to critically and systematically integrate knowledge and to analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations, even when limited information is available; - demonstrate an ability to critically, independently and creatively identify and formulate issues and to plan and, using appropriate methods, carry out advanced tasks within specified time limits, so as to contribute to the development of knowledge and to evaluate this work; - demonstrate an ability to clearly present and discuss their conclusions and the knowledge and arguments behind them, in dialogue with different groups, orally and in writing, in national and international contexts; and - demonstrate the skill required to participate in research and development work or to work independently in other advanced contexts.
<p><i>Judgement and approach</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate an ability to make assessments in their main field of study, taking into account relevant scientific, social and ethical aspects; - demonstrate insight into the role of knowledge in society and into people's responsibility for how knowledge is used; and - demonstrate an ability to identify their need of further knowledge and to upgrade their capabilities. 	<p><i>Judgement and approach</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate an ability to make assessments in their main field of study, taking into account relevant scientific, social and ethical aspects, and demonstrate an awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work; - demonstrate insight into the potential and limitations of science, its role in society and people's responsibility for how it is used; and - demonstrate an ability to identify their need of further knowledge and to take responsibility for developing their knowledge. 	<p><i>Judgement and approach</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate an ability to make assessments in their main field of study, taking into account relevant scientific, social and ethical aspects, and demonstrate an awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work; - demonstrate insight into the potential and limitations of science, its role in society and people's responsibility for how it is used; and - demonstrate an ability to identify their need of further knowledge and to take responsibility for developing their knowledge.

The new degree ordinance for degrees in the field of arts

The table below presents the differences between bachelor's degree and the two different master's degrees laid down in the new degree ordinance.

Total number of higher education credits and in-depth studies required

Degree of Bachelor of Arts in ... (Konstnärlig kandidatexamen)	Degree of Master of Arts (One Year) in ... (Konstnärlig magisterexamen)	Degree of Master of Arts (Two Years) in ... (Konstnärlig masterexamen)
<p>A degree of Bachelor of Arts is obtained after the student has completed course requirements of 180 higher education credits with a certain area of specialisation determined by each higher education institution itself.</p>	<p>A degree of Master of Arts (One Year) is obtained after the student has completed course requirements of 60 higher education credits with a certain area of specialisation determined by each higher education institution itself. In addition, the student must hold a Degree of Bachelor, a Degree of Bachelor of Arts, a professional degree worth at least 180 higher education credits or an equivalent foreign qualification. Exceptions may be made to the requirement of a previous qualification for a student who has been admitted to the educational programme without having had basic eligibility in the form of a qualification. However, this does not apply if in the admissions process an exception has been made under Chapter 7, Section 28, second paragraph on the grounds that there has been insufficient time to issue a qualification certificate.</p>	<p>A degree of Master of Arts (Two Years) is obtained after the student has completed course requirements of 120 higher education credits with a certain area of specialisation determined by each higher education institution itself. In addition, the student must hold a degree of Bachelor, a degree of Bachelor of Arts, a professional degree worth at least 180 higher education credits or an equivalent foreign qualification. Exceptions may be made to the requirement of a previous qualification for a student who has been admitted to the educational programme without having had basic eligibility in the form of a qualification. However, this does not apply if in the admissions process an exception has been made under Chapter 7, Section 28, second paragraph on the grounds that there has been insufficient time to issue a qualification certificate.</p>
<p>For a degree of Bachelor of Arts, students must have completed an independent project (degree project) worth at least 15 higher education credits in their main field of study, within the framework of the course requirements.</p>	<p>For a degree of Master of Arts (One Year), students must have completed an independent project (degree project) worth at least 15 higher education credits in their main field of study, within the framework of the course requirements.</p>	<p>For a degree of Master of Arts (Two Years), students must have completed an independent project (degree project) worth at least 30 higher education credits in their main field of study, within the framework of the course requirements. The independent project may comprise less than 30 higher education credits, but not less than 15 higher education credits, if the student has already completed an independent project at the second level worth at least 15 higher education credits in their main field of study, or an equivalent project in a foreign educational programme.</p>
<p><i>Miscellaneous</i> For a degree of Bachelor of Arts with a certain area of specialisation, more precise requirements are also to apply, as determined by each higher education institution itself within the framework of the requirements in this qualification description.</p>	<p><i>Miscellaneous</i> For a degree of Master of Arts (One Year) with a certain specialisation, more precise requirements are also to apply, as determined by each higher education institution itself within the framework of the requirements in this qualification description.</p>	<p><i>Miscellaneous</i> For a degree of Master of Arts (Two Years) with a certain area of specialisation, more precise requirements are also to apply, as determined by each higher education institution itself within the framework of the requirements in this qualification description.</p>

Degree objectives

For a Degree of Bachelor of Arts in... a student must	For a Degree of Master of Arts (One Year) in ... a student must	For a Degree of Master of Arts (Two Years) in... a student must
<p><i>Knowledge and understanding</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate knowledge and understanding in their main field of study, including knowledge of the practical and theoretical basis of the field, knowledge and experience of methods and processes, and in-depth knowledge and understanding in the field. 	<p><i>Knowledge and understanding</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate knowledge and understanding in their main field of study, including both a broad command of the field and deeper knowledge of parts of the field, together with insight into current research and development work; and - demonstrate deeper or broader knowledge and experience of methods and processes in the field. 	<p><i>Knowledge and understanding</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate knowledge and understanding in their main field of study, including both broad knowledge in the field and substantially deeper knowledge of parts of the field, together with deeper insight into current research and development work; and - demonstrate familiarity with methods and processes for dealing with complex phenomena, issues and situations in the field.
<p><i>Judgement and approach</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate an ability to make assessments in their main field of study, taking into account relevant artistic, social and ethical aspects; - demonstrate an understanding of the role of art in society; and - demonstrate an ability to identify their need of further knowledge and to upgrade their capabilities. 	<p><i>Judgement and approach</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate an ability to make assessments in their main field of study, taking into account relevant artistic, social and ethical aspects; - demonstrate insight into the role of art in society; and - demonstrate an ability to identify their need of further knowledge and to take responsibility for developing their knowledge. 	<p><i>Judgement and approach</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate an ability to make assessments in their main field of study, taking into account relevant artistic, social and ethical aspects; - demonstrate insight into the role of art in society; and - demonstrate an ability to identify their need of further knowledge and to take responsibility for developing their knowledge.

Appendix 5: Key ratios in programme evaluations for general degrees and professional qualifications

The corresponding key ratios for the programmes in the field of arts will be produced in collaboration with the higher education institutions involved by 2010.

Programmes at first and second level

All figures are accounted for per level.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Teaching capacity} &= \frac{\text{Student FTE's}^*}{\text{Teacher FTE's}} \\ \text{Teachers' qualifications} &= \frac{\text{Student FTE's}}{\text{Teacher FTE's with PhD's}} \\ \text{Supervisors' qualifications} &= \frac{\text{Total theses assessed}}{\text{Teacher FTE's with PhD's}} \\ \text{Performance level} &= \frac{\text{Annual performance equivalents}}{\text{Student FTE's}} \\ \text{Proportion of permanently employed staff} &= \frac{\text{Permanently employed staff FTE's}}{\text{Total FTE's}} \end{aligned}$$

Programmes at third level

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Supervisors' qualifications} &= \frac{\text{Research student FTE's}}{\text{Professors, associate professor FTE's}} \\ \text{Throughput} &= \frac{\text{Total new enrolments 4- 6 years ago}}{\text{Total PhD's awarded to group up to previous year}} \end{aligned}$$

* FTE = full-time equivalent

Appendix 6: Timetable for quality assurance audits

2008, start-up February 2008

Jönköping University Foundation
Kalmar University College
Karlstad University
Malmö University College
Mid Sweden University
Mälardalen University College
Växjö University
Örebro University
Södertörns University College

2009, start-up November 2008

Göteborg University
Linköping University
Lund University
Stockholm University
Umeå University
Uppsala University

2009, start-up February 2009

Borås University College
Dalarna University College
Gotland University College
Gävle University College
Halmstad University College
Kristianstad University College
Skövde University College
University College West

2010, start-up November 2009

Blekinge Institute of Technology
Chalmers University of Technology
The Swedish National Defence College
University College of Physical Education and Sports
Stockholm School of Economics
Karolinska Institute
Royal Institute of Technology
Luleå University of Technology
The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

2011, start-up November 2010

The Erica Foundation
Ersta Sköndal University College
Gammelkroppa School of Forestry
Johannelund Theological Seminary
The Red Cross University College of Nursing
Sophiahemmet University College
University College of Music Education
Stockholm School of Theology
Örebro Theological Seminary

2012, start-up November 2011

Beckmans College of Design
University College of Dance
University College of Film, Radio, Television and Theatre
University College of Art, Craft and Design
The Royal University College of Fine Arts
Royal University College of Music in Stockholm
Stockholm University College of Opera
Stockholm University College of Acting

Appendix 7: Timetable for programme evaluations

The new six-year plan has been organised mainly with the intention of linking the evaluation of closely related programme areas. This is partly to make it easier to produce the national surveys of subject areas and also to make it easier to organise appraisals on equivalent terms. At the same time it has been endeavoured to ensure that at least three years will have elapsed between the publication of the latest evaluation report and the implementation of the next evaluation. In one or two cases it has been impossible to comply with both criteria.

2008 – Humanities, teacher training and education

Classical archaeology and ancient history
Archaeology
Archive and library studies, museology
Children's and youth culture (Theme: Children)
Egyptology
Ethnology (Theme: Ethnicity, IMER)
Philosophy subjects
History
History of science and ideas
Cultural studies (Theme: Q, Social and cultural analysis, Culture and media production)
Theology and religious studies
Teaching qualifications for the folk high schools
Teaching qualifications
Education subjects
Degrees in special education

2009 – Social sciences

Work science
Demography
Economics (incl. Public finance and administration, Service management)
Economic history
Peace and conflict studies
Informatics
Cognitive science
Psychology/Psychology qualifications /Psychotherapy qualifications Sociology
(Theme: Health and the community, Theme: Technology and social change,
Technology and scientific studies, Theme: The elderly and ageing)
Political science

2010 – Humanities, languages

Linguistics/Linguistic science (Theme: Communication, Graduate school:

Language and culture in Europe)

Literature

Non-literary translation

English

Finno-Ugric languages

Classical languages

Modern Greek

Oriental and African languages

Romance languages

Swedish/Nordic languages

Slavic/Baltic languages

German/Dutch

East Asian languages

2011 – Natural sciences and technology

Biology subjects (Theme: Water)

Computer science subjects

Physics subjects

Chemistry subjects

Mathematics

Environmental science

Statistics

Physical planning

Master's programmes in engineering

Bachelor's programmes in engineering

Master Mariner and maritime programmes

Third level programmes in the technological sciences

2012 – Natural sciences, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, physical education and medicine

Agrarian programmes

Dietetics/Domestic science (Theme: Food)

Geography

Earth sciences

Human ecology

Physical education studies

Cultural geography

Programmes at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

Pharmacology

Third level programmes in the faculties of medicine

Public health science

Health and medical care administration

Managing health and welfare organisations

Dentistry

Professional qualifications in medicine and care

2013 – Humanities, social sciences and the field of arts

Gender studies (Theme: Gender)

Journalism

Law subjects

Media and communication studies

Study and career guidance

Tourism studies

Artistic subjects:

– fine art

– design and applied art

– interactive media

– music

– dramatic performance and production

Film studies

Musicology

History of art

Theatre studies

Appendix 8: Aspects and criteria for the appraisal of centres of excellent quality in higher education

The organisations that apply for this distinction must submit a clear and convincing account of how they are outstanding in their fulfilment of both national and local objectives in their programmes. The following aspects and criteria are provided as guidelines.

In order to be appraised for award of the distinction the application must clearly indicate

- that there is an educational setting, organisational structure, a quality assurance system and infrastructure that function exceptionally well,
- that the organisation is run by a competent management/administration and committed teachers with the relevant knowledge, experience and skills,
- that the organisation is firmly underpinned by an explicit and robust scientific and/or artistic foundation and/or tried and tested experience,
- that the forms of teaching and examination used in this setting are designed in accordance with the contents and objectives of the programme,
- that student learning is fostered in an eminent manner, and also
- that the centre's students attain exceptional results.

The application should also indicate clearly

- the factors of educational success,
- why these lead to exceptional results.

Appendix 9: Preliminary timetable for the selection process for centres of excellent quality in higher education

For each application round see www.hsv.se for updated and detailed information.

January: The National Agency circulates an invitation to Vice-Chancellors to apply for the distinction of “Centre of excellent quality in higher education”. The application form and guidelines for the application will be published on the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education’s web site.

15 April: Closing date for submission of applications and material for appraisal to the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education.

May–June: The staff of the National Agency and the panel of experts will conduct a preliminary appraisal on the basis of the material attached to the applications. A small number of applications will then go on to a second assessment round. Site visits of one to two days will be made to the organisations selected for further appraisal.

August–October: The panel of experts will analyse the material presented in the applications and their findings during the site visits and make their evaluations.

December: The National Agency will reach a decision and announce which organisations are to receive the distinction of centres of excellent quality in higher education for the current year.

Following January: Representatives from these organisations will be invited, together with the Vice-Chancellors of their higher education institutions, to Stockholm where the distinction will be conferred ceremoniously. At the same time a new invitation will be circulated to the Vice-Chancellors to apply for the distinction for the year to come.

