



FACULTY
OF SOCIAL
SCIENCES

DECISION

Reg. No.
STYR 2021/118

2021-02-04

Faculty Board

Instruction for external experts regarding programme evaluation at the Faculty of Social Sciences

This decision enters into force on 4 February 2021 and replace and invalidate the previous decision on Instructions for external experts regarding programme evaluations at the Faculty of Social Sciences (reg. no STYR 2019/1262 dated 19 September 2021).

Introduction

Programme evaluations at the Faculty of Social Sciences at Lund University are to drive development and quality, focusing on strengths and challenges. The external expert group's collective recommendations are to act as support in the long-term quality enhancement of the programmes covered by the evaluation and constitute a part of the faculty's quality assurance management.

The evaluations by external experts are conducted regularly over a six-year cycle, and all cycles (first, second and third) are assessed according to the same method. As a rule, an external expert group is assigned to assess a group (a cluster) of programmes at the same time.

Assignment

The assignment of the external expert group is to

- prior to a site visit, review and analyse the department's self-assessment, including supporting documentation, with associated student/doctoral student input
- prior to a site visit, prepare a statement and prepare questions
- participate in site visits
- after a site visit, finalise a statement in accordance with the agreed schedule
- participate in online feedback meetings (chair).

The external expert group's statement is to cover the strengths, challenges and development potential of the learning environment and programmes. This could be an aspect that the department highlights in its self-assessment, but also an aspect that the external expert group considers important for the department's continued quality management. It is not part of the external expert group's assignment to grade the programmes included in the evaluation, as the focus is to be on constructive development.

If the expert group requests more or supplementary material, there is an opportunity for dialogue with both the department and the faculty office, which can produce additional material if necessary, during the entire process.

The chair of the external expert group is responsible for leading and allocating work within the external expert group and for coordinating the writing process in work on the external expert statement. This includes communicating with other members of the group prior to the site visit, allocating work in the analysis of the supporting documentation, and responsibility for ensuring a preliminary statement and questions are prepared prior to the site visit.

The chair communicates with the department and faculty office regarding the schedule for the process and organisation of the site visit, leads the meetings involved in the site visit, and

participates in the online feedback meeting after the external expert statement is finalised.

Expected scope of the work

The scope is expected to correspond to approximately one week's work for all members of the external expert group, with a further two or so days' work for the chair. This includes the reading and analysis of the self-assessment and supporting documentation, preparation of and participation in site visit, and writing a statement. The work is to be carried out in accordance with a predetermined schedule.

Reimbursement and expenses

Costs relating to fees, travel and any overnight stays in connection with the external expert group's visit are covered by the Faculty of Social Sciences.

Schedule

The schedule for the work is agreed in dialogue with the department, faculty office and chair of the external expert group.

Supporting documentation

Supporting documentation for the external experts consists of the department's self-assessment and the input of students/doctoral students, and various types of documentation in the form, for example, of policy documents, instructions, minutes, statistics and key performance indicators, and a selection of degree projects/theses.¹ The supporting documentation for the external experts is collected in a shared LU Box that is made available by the faculty office in connection with the commencement of the external expert group's work.

¹ It is not part of the external expert group's assignment to act as a review body for individual degree projects/theses.

The department's self-assessment comprises Lund University's eleven criteria for quality assurance headings. Under each criterion is a reference to relevant supporting documentation, which is available in a shared LU Box. The self-assessment may contain clarifications of specific prevailing conditions for the programme/programmes that are not clearly presented in the documentation, information on significant contexts for how certain documentation is to be understood or information on planned or ongoing development work.

The department may also use the self-assessment to highlight particular challenges in the programmes, challenges which the external expert group is assigned to analyse.

Lund University's criteria for quality review:

1. That the actual study results correspond to learning outcomes and exam goals
2. That the programme focuses on students'/doctoral students' learning
3. That the programme is based on a scientific and/or artistic foundation and proven experience
4. That teaching staff, including supervisors, have appropriate expertise in terms of subject, teaching and learning in higher education and subject teaching as well as other relevant expertise, and that teaching capacity is sufficient
5. That the programme is to be relevant for the students and doctoral students and meets the needs of society
6. That the students and doctoral students have an influence on planning, implementation and follow up of the programme
7. That an appropriate study and learning environment is available to all and includes a well-functioning support system
8. That there is continuous follow up and development of the programme

9. That internationalisation and an international perspective is promoted in the programme
10. That gender equality and equal opportunities perspectives are integrated in the programme
11. That subject-relevant perspectives on sustainable development are promoted in the programme

External expert group statement

The external expert group sums up the collective experiences in a statement that analyses the strengths and challenges of the programme/programmes, and make proposals for areas of improvement. A guideline for the statement is that it should be approximately 10-15 pages.

In its statement, the external expert group can draw attention to best practice in the programme. Furthermore, the external expert group can state possible higher education institutions/programmes for benchmarking with an aim to promote the development work. The department and students/doctoral students who have participated in the self-assessment are to be given an opportunity to comment on any factual errors before the statement is published.

The following headings are to be included in the external expert group statement:

- Assignment and composition of the external expert group
- The main strengths and challenges of the learning environment and programme/programmes, and the external expert group's reflections and recommendations for development, based on Lund University's eleven criteria for quality development
- The external expert group's summarised views and recommendations
- Appendix: programme for site visit

A template for the external expert group statement is provided by the faculty office.

The external expert group statement is published on the faculty website.

Site visit

A site visit is carried out once the external expert group has reviewed the supporting documentation and prepared a preliminary statement and questions. The site visit is carried out during a working day at the premises where the programme/programmes are based. Meetings are conducted with programme and department management, teaching staff/supervisors, students/doctoral students and relevant administrative staff such as study advisers and education administrators.

The site visit can be planned as follows:

8:30–9:30 Department/programme management

9:45–11:15 Teaching staff representatives

11:30–12:30 Students/doctoral students

12:30–13:30 Lunch

13:45–14:30 Study advisers/education administration

14:30–15:00 Tour of the learning environment and teaching premises

15:00–16:00 The external expert group works in private session

16:00–16:30 Feedback to department management/equivalent

The detailed planning of the site visit is conducted according to the external expert group's wishes in dialogue with the department.

Feedback meeting with the chair

Once an external expert statement is finalised, a feedback meeting is conducted with the chair of the external expert group, student/doctoral student representative, faculty office, faculty management and the department. The aim is for the chair to describe how the external expert group has experienced the evaluation process and also provide the recipients of the

statement an opportunity to pose questions and discuss the content. The meeting is usually conducted as an online meeting.

Schedule for evaluations starting in the spring semester

November/December

- The dean approves the external expert group's composition and appoints a chair after consultation with students and doctoral students.

March

- Administrators at the faculty office make the self-assessment and supporting documentation available in LU Box for the external expert group.
- Students/doctoral students upload student/doctoral student input in LU Box.
- The external expert group allocates the work, reviews the supporting documentation, self-assessment and student/doctoral student input.

April

- The external expert group works on the statement, possible additions to the supporting documentation and questions prior to the site visit.

May-June

- Site visits are conducted in Lund/Helsingborg.
- After the site visit, the external expert group sends the statement to the faculty office.
- Online feedback meeting with chair, faculty office, faculty management, department and students/doctoral student representative.