

# Minutes from the meeting on 19.06.20 of the Steering Group for the implementation of Charter and Code (C&C) at UiB

From 12.00 to 13.45

**Present:** Kjell Bernstrøm  
Margareth Hagen  
Sonja Dyrkorn (meeting leader)  
Camilla Bernt  
Odd André Karlsen  
Magdalena Keindl

**Secretary:** Even O. Sørland

## 1. Comments and recommendations from the EC assessment team

The meeting began with a presentation of the Consensus Report and feedback related to the UiB application. The Consensus Report has been sent in its entirety to the Steering Group.

The feedback is provided in the form of final comments on the evaluation's conclusion, along with nine specific recommendations. According to the assessment of UiB's application, the analysis and Action Plan met all the requirements for achieving the «HR Excellence in Research» status. The assessment team's recommendations were summarized, emphasizing comments and suggestions that should be prioritized in future work. These recommendations provide important guidance for the revised Action Plan in 2021 and for the implementation of individual actions.

The Steering Group noted that the assessment team commented on UiB's well-documented broad involvement of researchers, academic and administrative leadership. They also highlighted that important elements were already being addressed and that many good initiatives were underway in what appears to be an ongoing process within the organization.

The assessment team positively emphasized the thorough analysis of strengths and weaknesses, conducted with transparency regarding areas for improvement. The Steering Group emphasized the importance of a conscious approach to determining the appropriate level of ambition for new actions in future discussions.

## 2. Project implementation phase

The Steering Group endorsed the plans for project follow-up outlined in the letter dated May 19 and the schedule for Steering Group meetings during the 2020/2021 period. It was emphasized that the work should be integrated into university leadership and that the project should align with ongoing organizational processes, such as work related to ERC (European Research Council). Effective coordination will be a critical success factor in this effort.

## 3. Updated communication plan

The updated communication plan was sent in advance and was presented with a focus on adjustments for the implementation phase. The communication plan serves as a central tool for implementation, and continues the overall objectives of the project, addressing work methods and communication challenges, while specifying concrete actions to support the implementation.

The Steering Group emphasized that it is important for the HREiR logo to be used widely – both in application processes and, for example, in the follow-up work related to career plans. The logo holds significance not only in applications but also for individual applicants considering a future at UiB. Simultaneously, it was pointed out that *HR in Research* should not be isolated as a separate project; rather, it should be broadly incorporated. Employees need to be aware of the quality stamp represented by HREiR and receive information about relevant content. Details about the project can be available for those who wish to explore it further.

#### **4. Review of the status for each individual action**

In line with the outlined structure for project follow-up, the secretariat had conducted initial meetings with some units/responsible parties prior to this meeting and summarized the status of individual actions. An updated status report for the actions as of June 2020 had been distributed as an attachment.

During the meeting, all actions were quickly reviewed to provide an overview and highlight connections. The focus was on actions with a 2020 completion deadline and those requiring further clarification. The Steering Group's discussion centered around the following topics:

##### **Action 1 – OTM-R**

The first action in the Action Plan pertains to the follow-up on the OTM-R checklist (Open, Transparent, and Merit-Based Recruitment of Researchers). The assessment team has provided a separate recommendation regarding OTM-R, highlighting the need for more precise analyses of UiB's practices. This recommendation forms the basis for an adjusted approach to the OTM-R action, emphasizing increased transparency:

1. Establishing a Common Description for the Research Position Recruitment Process at UiB. This description will build upon best practices, clarify the process, and enhance quality. The work must involve broad participation.
2. Channel Strategy: transparency regarding rules and procedures in the HR field must be strengthened online, particularly to provide international applicants with a solid foundation for evaluating conditions and requirements.

These actions should also be considered in conjunction with other measures outlined in the Action Plan and ongoing processes within the organization. The assessment team's input regarding quality assurance systems for OTM-R and a review to ensure alignment between the new OTM-R policy and UiB's overall recruitment practices for scientific positions will also be addressed.

##### **Action 6**

###### **1) Career advice**

The Steering Group provided input that, when working with career advice, one should not sharply distinguish between academic and non-academic paths. At many faculties, transitioning between academia and other professional fields is a natural part of competence-building and is not considered a "career break." Simultaneously, it was emphasized that a recurring critique from a Ph.D. perspective is the lack of career guidance. While university requirements are clear to candidates, they need more information about life beyond academia. Universities abroad have developed expertise in this area.

The Steering Group discussed whether *Sammen* could play a role in this. *Sammen* and UiB have an established collaboration regarding career advice for students, and *Sammen* possesses expertise about the job market that UiB may not be able to replicate. Simultaneously, the Steering Group emphasized that *Sammen's* services are tailored to students, with a very different starting point than Ph.D. candidates. While cautioning against fully outsourcing the initiative, considering individual courses and specific services could be a natural consideration.

Dyrkorn summarized the discussion and proposed that follow-up on this action should be a continued focus. It is crucial for UiB to establish a platform for career advice and ensure accountability for its content. The Division of Human Resources and the Division of Research and Innovation (FIA) will collaboratively prepare to address this topic in the Research Committee in autumn 2020. A career advice service for Ph.D. candidates must focus on their specific needs, and it is essential for UiB to engage in a thorough discussion regarding the format and boundaries in relation to other services.

### 3) Transferrable skills

The Steering Group also provided input that considerations should also be made for groups other than Ph.D. candidates as the target user group.

#### **Action 8**

Dyrkorn provided an update on additional follow-up actions after the board's deliberation, specifically related to delegation arrangements for appraisal interviews. The Steering Group expressed positivity regarding efforts to clarify the content of the appraisal interviews. The term can be complex and encompasses various aspects. It is important to maintain a conscious understanding of leadership responsibilities and to emphasize that many individuals share the responsibility for professional development.

#### **Action 10**

The Steering Group suggested that more should be built around postdoctoral researchers, and that supervisors for these should also be a target group. Dyrkorn emphasized that there are no limitations, even though the initiative is based on feedback from Ph.D. candidates in the survey that was conducted.

It was also discussed whether an approach based on the "best practice" model would be better than implementing new central initiatives. It is important that it is perceived as relevant and includes local perspectives. Could one instead build upon the established arenas within the faculties while also providing guidance on what needs to be preserved and offer content/resources? The input will be included in the discussion raised to the Research Committee (FU) in the fall of 2020.

#### **Action 11**

A possible extension of the action to include the researcher group will be considered during the revision of the Action Plan and in connection with the work on common guidelines for promotion to position code researcher 1183.

#### **Action 12**

Dyrkorn pointed out the connection with the input regarding action 6, which aims to break down the sharp distinction between academia and career opportunities outside academia.

#### **Action 13**

Dyrkorn mentioned that this action also will be considered in connection with the ongoing revisions of the Action Plans for diversity/inclusion and equality.

#### **Generally**

Dyrkorn summarized that the review indicates that some measures have been completed, others are under follow-up, while some require further discussion. In this initial meeting, the focus was on the overall assessment. Moving forward, the follow-up will be more directly related to individual actions.

The Steering Group expressed satisfaction with the progress on follow-up work and the meeting's review. However, they emphasized the importance of using terminology that ensures content accessibility. Precision levels concerning the EU Commission can be addressed elsewhere.

The meeting presentation is attached to the minutes.

26.06.2020/EVSØR