

# Directives from Universities Norway (UHR) for its strategic units and their subordinate bodies

Adopted by the Board of UHR on 14 December 2017

## § 1 Objectives

The strategic units at Universities Norway (UHR) will contribute to UHR's aims and activities through strategic and coordinated work within each unit's areas of expertise and responsibility. The strategic units are national arenas for coordination between member institutions and will advise UHR's Board.

UHR's strategic units consist of *disciplinary strategic units* that cover disciplines in higher education and *national strategic units* that cover the shared tasks of the institutions. The units are named: *UHR-XX*.

## § 2 Tasks

UHR's strategic units will contribute to fulfilling the objectives and primary tasks of UHR as they are formulated in the organisation's regulations and strategy.

By creating a network of leaders from the sector, the strategic units will contribute to coordinating and promoting development in their disciplinary areas and areas of responsibility.

In these areas, the strategic units will contribute to UHR's role as a strategic interest organisation for member institutions, for example by:

- being a link between member institutions and promoting national cooperation, coordination and the division of work
- contributing to strengthening contacts and shared interests between member institutions and authorities and other relevant players
- promoting awareness of research and higher education in society and business, and by participating in professional and political processes
- initiating or contributing to the active sharing of knowledge and experience
- preparing cases for and advising UHR's Board
- fostering across-the-board tasks in the sector (such as knowledge transfer, innovation, internationalisation, recruitment, digitalisation, gender balance and diversity)

The strategic units have a national responsibility for developing recommendations and

statements within their area of expertise. These must be rooted in, and disseminated on behalf of, UHR. UHR's Board will normally issue statements if several of UHR's strategic units are involved.

Strategic units may, on their own initiative or that of others, deal with issues and problems within their disciplinary areas and areas of responsibility. Follow-up of such cases is performed by the unit in cooperation with member institutions or other relevant bodies.

Strategic units must adopt an action plan within the framework of UHR's strategy and resources. The units report to the Board.

### **§ 3 Composition and representation**

Member institutions of UHR that offer degrees within the relevant disciplines are entitled to representation in the disciplinary strategic units. All member institutions participate in the national strategic units.<sup>1</sup>

The strategic units decide themselves how many representatives from member institutions may attend meetings. The minimum level of representation is one from each institution, plus student representatives nominated by the National Union of Students in Norway (NSO).

Representatives must be from management level, unless exceptional circumstances dictate otherwise, and follow their term of office at their institution. Institutions appoint one substitute for each representative.

NSO is entitled to a maximum of three representatives in strategic units. NSO is entitled to one representative and substitute in the units' working committees and national expert bodies.

Student representatives are appointed for a year at a time.

UHR's strategic units individually choose chairs and deputy chairs from among the representatives by simple majority. The term for chairs and deputies is two years, with the potential for re-election to two further terms. These chairs also lead the working committee.

Strategic units may appoint observers. Observers are nominated by their principal. Working committees may also invite external participants to individual or group meetings. Observers may speak and make proposals.

### **§ 4 Working methods**

UHR's strategic units meet once or twice each year. UHR's Secretary General, Board and chairs of the units can all convene meetings as necessary. A meeting must be called when demanded by at least half the members.

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<sup>1</sup>Three units have representation that does not follow the general rule. UHR-Sami is composed of representatives from institutions with special responsibility for Sami research and higher education. UHR-Publishing is composed of representatives from different disciplines, institutional sectors and healthcare companies. Only institutions with museums participate in UHR-Museum.

The strategic units and their subordinate bodies are quorate when at least half their members are present. Each member institution has one vote and NSO has two votes. Proposals are accepted by simple majority. In case of a split vote, the chairs' vote count is decisive.

## **§ 5 Working committee, national discipline bodies and working groups**

All UHR's strategic units must have a working committee that follows up work between the meetings.

Each strategic unit evaluates and decides the best way of organising work and coordination within each disciplinary area or area of responsibility.

The units may establish and close down subordinate bodies. To ensure contacts between the strategic units and the national expert bodies, the chairs of these must participate in meetings of the strategic body that founded them. They have the right to speak and make proposals, but no voting rights.

### **§ 5.1 Working committees**

The working committee represents the strategic unit between meetings. The working committee is responsible for the strategic unit and must prepare, convene and lead meetings in the strategic unit.

Members of the working committee are elected for four-year terms and may be re-elected for one further term. The chairs have the same term of office as for the strategic unit, cf. Section 3, paragraph 5.

The strategic units choose members for their working committees themselves, with a maximum number of ten, and select numbered substitutes for these members. Working committees must strive towards gender balance, diversity and appropriate representation in relation to disciplinary breadth, geography and the types of institution. Members are substituted by a substitute taking their place. If a chair resigns, the deputy or other elected member steps into this position.

Working committees may invite observers to their meetings. Working committees convene as necessary, normally four times each year.

### **§ 5.2 National expert bodies and working groups**

UHR's strategic units establish subordinate bodies in their disciplinary area or area of responsibility. Their composition, duration and organisation are determined by the strategic unit. The bodies can nominate observers as necessary.

#### **§ 5.2.1 National expert bodies and permanent working groups**

To work on long-term tasks in specific areas of expertise, the strategic units establish national expert bodies or permanent working groups. The national expert bodies are called "*National expert body for...*".

The purpose of national expert bodies and permanent working groups is to cater to the institutions' needs for academic and administrative development, experience exchanges,

coordination and national coordination in neighbouring disciplinary and thematic areas. Other tasks and objectives are provided by the strategic unit as necessary.

National expert bodies and working groups report to the strategic unit. Decisions on establishing and closing down the national expert bodies can be referred to the UHR Board.

#### §5.2.2 Ad hoc working groups and working methods

UHR's strategic units may establish ad hoc working groups, arenas for cooperation and other targeted measures to work on defined tasks.

### **§ 6 Administrative support and resources**

The secretariat function of strategic units and their working committees is normally located at UHR's secretariat. Administrative support for subordinate bodies is normally located at the institution that chairs the body.

Expenses associated with participation in meetings of the strategic units, their working committees and their subordinate bodies are covered by the participating institutions and organisations.

Student representatives appointed by NSO normally have their expenses covered by the student organisation.