



UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND

Faculty of Odontology

SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES

SELF-REVIEW REPORT



May 2021





UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND

Introduction

In accordance with the Icelandic Quality Enhancement Framework at the University level in Iceland and the University of Iceland's Guidelines for the organization, schedule and process of institution-led review of faculties and interdisciplinary programmes, the Faculty of Odontology, School of Health Sciences, University of Iceland, carried out self-evaluation during the autumn semester of 2020. The results are presented in this report. A self-evaluation committee was established in March 2020 and same month an international expert was contacted who accepted her roll shortly after. Meetings were held during fall of 2020.

The committee members were:

1. Ellen Flosadóttir, associate professor, Head of the Faculty of Odontology and Chairperson of the self-evaluation committee.
2. Kristín Heimisdóttir, assistant professor and Head of the Study committee.
3. Aðalheiður Svana Sigurðardóttir, doctoral graduate student and Head of the Department of Dental Technology.
4. Eva Guðrún Sveinsdóttir, assistant professor and academic staff representative.
5. Erna Rún Einarsdóttir, assistant professor and academic staff representative.
6. Vilhelm Grétar Ólafsson, assistant professor and academic staff representative.
7. Margrét Stefánsdóttir, webmaster at the School of Health Sciences and secretary of the committee.
8. Birta Þórsdóttir, cand.odont., former student (graduated in 2020).
9. Ægir Benediktsson, 6th year student, student representative.
10. Kolfinna Líf Pálsdóttir, 5th year student, student representative.

In the summer of 2020 (August), the committee arranged meetings with experts from the Quality Administration, Centre for Teaching and Learning, the Social Science Research Institute and the University central administration. Core statistics describing the Faculty including number of students, funding and research activities were provided by the central administration. The Centre for Teaching and Learning provided expert assistance in the revision of learning objectives and outcomes for all academic staff at the Faculty.

Student focus meetings were arranged to provide feedback on the study programmes. This was done with a group of students from the Faculty, meeting with project manager from the Social Science Research Institute. Another group including dentists graduating from the Faculty 2015-2020 held a meeting and made a report based on their experience during their education and after graduation. This report therefore relies primarily on information that the self-review committee collected on student views and opinions in the focus groups.

A committee of four individuals acted as international external experts during the self-evaluation process. The external panel visited the Faculty of Odontology and consulted with the self-evaluation committee as well as with other members of staff and students in February 2021. The members of the expert panel were:

1. Cecilia Christersson DDS PhD, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Global Engagement and Challenge Based Learning, Malmö University
2. Stefan Lindgren Senior Professor in Gastroenterology, Lund University, Sweden
3. Lisbeth Fagerström, Rector of Åbo Akademi University in Vasa and Professor in Caring Science, Faculty of Education and Welfare Studies, Åbo Akademi
4. Stuart Binder-Macleod, Edward L. Ratledge Professor & Associate Deputy Provost for Clinical and Translational Research, Department of Physical Therapy, University of Delaware

Faculty Characteristics

The Faculty of Odontology is the only dental school in Iceland. It is one of the smallest faculties in dentistry worldwide with only 8 students per year in dentistry (TAN) and 5 students per year in dental technology (TSM) (Appendix 1, Table 1). Beside these two study programmes the Faculty offers academic training to masters and doctorate degree level but the Faculty does not offer postgraduate clinical specialist training in dentistry. Postgraduate education at masters and doctoral levels are indeed possible but the motivation for graduate students to continue with further education has been limited. One of the motivations has been to increase the possibility for graduates to attend good schools abroad for clinical specialist training. The Faculty runs the only official dental clinic in Iceland meeting the needs of a big group of people for less expensive dental treatment. It has a strong clinical curriculum, giving the students a good preparation for their clinical carrier but the Faculty has not as strong research curriculum. The program provides students with enough hours of clinical training to be able to apply for a license to practice dentistry in Iceland and in the countries of the EEA, according to Icelandic law and regulations. Thus, the cand.odont. degree from the University of Iceland permits registration as a dentist with the Ministry of Health and Social Insurance Administration without further training or qualification.

The administration of the Faculty is in accordance with University regulation 569/2009, more specifically articles 17 to 20. The Faculty is governed by a Faculty Meeting, held at least twice every term (more often if needed). Further, there is a Faculty Board that meets at least once a month, for discussion and decisions (granted authority from Faculty Meeting), as necessary. Student representatives attend both Faculty Meetings and Faculty Board Meetings. Daily administration is in the hands of the Faculty Head with assistance from the Vice Head, as needed. The Faculty Head is also a member of the Executive Board of the School of Health Sciences. The Department of Dental Technology has its own administration and representatives both in the Faculty Meeting and the Faculty Board.

The Faculty of Odontology currently has a total of 21 academic teaching positions or the equivalence of 12.2 positions (Appendix 1, Table 2). Three of the Faculty members have a doctoral degree and the remaining have a master's degree. Both professors have doctoral degree from the University of Iceland and one of the assistant professors has a doctoral degree from Sweden. The Faculty members have expertise in most of the specialties within dentistry. (CVs provided in Appendix 4, Committees in Appendix 3). Adjunct professors are 4 in positions equivalent to 1.8 FTE. Forty-six sessional teachers are involved with the teaching activities within the Faculty, responsible for 16.9 full time positions. These sessional teachers

take care of preclinical teaching, clinical teaching as well as other teaching activities. The gender division has changed rapidly last years at the Faculty as in most other subjects within the University, making the ratio between female and male Faculty members almost even. However, the same gender balance cannot be claimed for sessional teachers as higher proportion of sessional teachers are women. This may be because higher number of females have graduated from the Faculty in recent years than males and newly graduated are frequently getting in to offer instructions.

An overview of students and study programmes can be found in Appendix 1, Table 3. There is significant interest for becoming a dental professional in Iceland and a considerable competition to obtain a place at the Faculty of Odontology. This is dealt with by having an open entrance to students that meet the minimum requirements, an upper-secondary education, for entry to University-level education according to the law in Iceland.

Students attend a course focused on basic biology, anatomy, chemistry, professional identity and dental morphology; theoretical and practical. After the first term 8 dental students (TAN) and 5 dental technology students (TSM) with the highest weighted average grades are offered to continue their studies at the Faculty. Drop-outs after this strict entry process are very rare, which is not the case in many other areas of university programmes in Iceland. Because of the strict selection procedure only a few students complete the courses each year, however, all of them with a completion rate of 100%.

Summary and Main Conclusions for the Faculty

Lessons learned from QEF1

Overall, the Faculty has made considerable progress since the last review and has implemented several of the actions and goals set in the 2014 review:

- Students are informed of results from exams in numerus clausus earlier than before.
- Regular meetings are held with students from each year in a group to find out what could be done better and if there are some problems going on regarding some courses.
- Lectures are given in periods at the clinical years.
- Students are informed of their progress in the clinical subjects by informal interviews.
- The dental clinic has got an intra-oral scanner.
- The MS programme has become easier to complete after finishing the cand odont. degree.
- The preclinical equipment has been renewed.
- The Faculty of Odontology gets bonuses when graduating their students with cand odont. degree.
- Students have access to the technique after hours.
- A new laboratory technician has been recruited.

Teaching and Learning

The Faculty has recently revised the learning outcomes for all its courses and the total programme. Curricular mapping has even been carried out to assure coordination across courses.

Since the Faculty cannot rely on outcome from student surveys conducted by the University, student focus meeting has been carried out to provide feedback on the study programmes. This was done with a group of students from the Faculty, meeting with project manager from the Social Science Research Institute. Another group including dentists graduating from the Faculty 2015-2020 held a meeting and made a report based on their experience during their education and after graduation.

The Faculty has generated an action plan (Appendix 2) that includes the main concerns raised by students. This includes following:

- Arrange for a special study room for students at the Faculty of Odontology.
- Informal interview between teacher and student at the spring semester at pre-clinic (on third year) discussing the students progress and what could be done better.
- Faculty members should inform students in time if they have to change teaching hours to respect their students schedule, and even strive to complete their teaching during working hours on weekdays.
- Use intraoral skanner more frequently and provide the students with good instructions on how to use the scanner to be more fluent in using it on a regular basis.
- The departmental office should have better communication with students, giving them necessary information when needed.

- Update the course in anesthesia.
- Make the course in Radiography more structured for dental students.
- Introductory course on first year should be transferred to the second year.
- Encourage Faculty members to take diploma course in teaching and learning studies to improve their pedagogic skills.
- Mandatory for students to work on research project – will increase research experience for students and research output by the Faculty and increase funding to the Faculty through research.
- New dental units for the clinic have been approved by the management of the University of Iceland. The new units will increase the quality of the clinical facilities and make a better working environment for the students.

Management of Research

The Faculty of Odontology has not written formal documents on research policy by defining specific research areas or outcomes, but rather its goals and strategies have a manifestation in the broad University policy on free pursuit of knowledge and scientific research that meets stringent ethical standards.

A small number of masters and doctorate students as well as the lack of clinical specialist programs limits the possibility of an established and active research atmosphere at the Faculty of Odontology. This is reflected in the research output of faculty (Appendix 1, Table 4). Low research output per Faculty member is closely connected to the fact that all members attend their clinical work outside of the Faculty since there is no Faculty clinic. Due to this there is a very limited funding possibility.

The Faculty staff conduct research and becomes involved in the student research to seek further knowledge about dental health and treatment.

The Faculty of Odontology also conduct basic and clinical research in the field of dentistry and provides the Government of Iceland or other relevant bodies with advice on matters concerning dentistry and dental health when such advice is requested.

Follow-up Processes

The implementation of the Action Plan will be a standing item on meetings of the Faculty Board and similarly Faculty Head will report on the progress regularly to the School Board. Faculty Head reports formally to the School Dean on the status of the implementation and plans for next year together with other relevant QA matters no later than 1 December and this will be followed up in the School Board. The School Dean will subsequently make use of this report in a status report for all Faculties in the School, which will be submitted to the Quality Committee no later than 15 January. The Quality Committee writes a short report to the Rector no later than 1 February, which will subsequently be discussed in a meeting between the Chair of the Quality Committee, the Director of Quality Management and Rector, Vice-Rectors. Deans of Schools and the Managing Director of the Central Administration.

Appendix 1. Key Figures.

Table 1. Overview of present Study Programmes within the Faculty

Name of Study Programme	Cycle ¹	Degree	Credits (ECTS)
TSM261 Dental Technology	1.2	BS	180 ECTS
TAN281 Odontology	1.2	Cand.odont.	360 ECTS
TAN441 Odontology	2.2	MS	120 ECTS
TAN501 Dentistry	3	PhD	180/240 ECTS

¹ See National Qualification Framework for Higher Education No. 530/2011.

Table 2. Faculty members as of 15 March 2020 and sessional teachers 2019, number (No.) and full time-equivalent (FTE).

	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	FTE	No.	FTE	No.	FTE
Professors	1	1.0	1	1.0	2	2.0
Associate Professors	0	0.0	1	0.8	1	0.8
Assistant Professors	8	4.5	4	3.1	12	7.6
Adjuncts	4	1.1	2	0.7	6	1.8
Total	13	6.57	8	5.64	21	12.2
Sessional teachers	16	8.6	30	8.3	46	16.9

Table 3. Total number of students, number of entrants, retention rate for first year, and completion rate (4-year mean).

Programme	No. of students			No. of entrants ³	Retention rate	No. of graduates	Completion rate ⁴
	Total no.	Full time ¹	Part time ²				
TSM261	19	16	2	8	63	4	100
TAN281	113	92	13	64	58	7	100
TAN441	10	0.8	5	2	17	1	75
TAN501	1.5	1		0		0	-

¹ > 22.5 ECTS completed. For Ph.D. students > 1 ECTS completed.

² 1-22 ECTS completed.

³ For all programmes except Ph.D., no. of students completing at least one examination in first term.

⁴ 2-year rate for diploma, 4-year rate for B.A./B.S., 3-year rate for M.A./M.S., 5-year rate for Ph.D.

Table 4. Research output of Faculty members, based on the Evaluation System for the Public Universities in Iceland, expressed by mean total research points (A) and mean research points from peer-reviewed publications only (B) per FTE.

	2015		2016		2017		2018		Mean	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
Faculty	17.0	8.1	16.3	9.1	18.9	8.9	21.7	17.0	18.5	17.0
School	39.7	29.0	40.6	29.6	34.7	24.1	37.7	27.6	38.2	39.7
University	37.8	24.7	37.1	25.1	34.8	22.8	37.8	26.4	36.9	37.8

Appendix 2. Action Plan for Teaching and Learning and Management of Research in QEF2

	Actions	How	Deadlines	Responsible party
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2.1 TSM261 Dental Technology (BS 180 ECTS)

Ch. 2.1.1	Students			
1	Add basic training in statistic earlier in the programme, suitable for analysis of research data at 6 th semester.	Reform TSM503G courses on 5 th semester and include statistical training using SPSS	Autumn 2022	Head of department Head of study committee Teachers in courses
Ch. 2.1.2	Teaching and Learning			
1	Increase CAD training and Implement the CAM part of the education in the programme	Add time to students CAD training and CAM lectures on 3D printing and 3D material science	Autumn 2022	Head of department Course supervisors
2	CAD/CAM equipment needed for vigorous training in the area	Apply for a grant to buy CAM 3D printer and curing light ¹ CAD software at once (licences and resources) to train multiple student at once ²	¹ Spring 2021 ² Spring 2022	¹ Faulty Dean ^{1,2} Head of department ² Study committee
3	Implement oral examination on 2 nd to 4 th semester	Change type of assessment to meet student needs	Spring 2022	Head of study committee Teachers in courses
4	Oral presentation 3 rd and 4 th semester	Change type of assessment to meet student needs	Autumn 2021	Head of study committee Teachers in courses
Ch. 2.1.3	Coordination between teaching and research			
1	Course supporting data analysis and BS project (6 ECTS)	Review curricula and reform to meet the students needs	2 years	Head of department Study committee
2	BS project (10 ECTS)	Review curricula and reform to meet the students needs	2 years	Head of department Study committee

2.2 TAN281 Odontology (Cand.Odont. 360 ECTS)

Ch. 2.2.1	Students			
1	The departmental office should have better communication with students.	Give information to students when needed.	Spring 2021	Departmental office.
2	All courses should have the right number of ECTS units in the course catalogue at the	Prevent distress for students.	Fall 2021	Departmental office.

	beginning of each school year.			
3	Make course in Radiography more structured for students at the Faculty.	Avoid students to attend lectures that are not fit for their education.	Fall 2021	Faculty Head discusses with the teacher
4	Encourage Faculty members to attend courses in teaching and learning or even a diploma course.	Increase the pedagogic skills of the Faculty members.	Within 5 years.	Faculty Head
Ch. 2.2.2	Teaching and Learning			
1	Informal interview between teacher and student at the spring semester at pre-clinic (on third year).	Discussing the students progress and what could be done better.	Spring 2021	Faculty Head informs instructors on pre-clinic
2	Introductory course for 1 st year should be transferred to the second year.	Students will learn more from the course on second year since they are present at the clinic once a week assisting sixth year students examining patients at their first appointment to the school.	Fall 2021	Study Committee
3	Anaesthesia course - update	Student require the course to have more quality and go further into the subject.	Fall 2021	Faculty head
4	Use intraoral scanner more frequently and give the students good instructions to be able to use it on a regular basis.	Use of intraoral scanners has become general in dental offices today. It is important for the students to get to know how to use the instrument.	Spring 2021	Faculty members in prosthodontics and restorative dentistry.
5	New dental units for the clinic has been approved by the management of the University of Iceland.	The new units will increase the quality of the clinical facilities and make a better working environment for the students.	They are estimated to be delivered during 2021.	The University of Iceland
Ch. 2.2.3	Coordination between teaching and research			
1	Make it mandatory for TAN students to work on a research project	Will increase research experience for students and research output by the Faculty	Within 5 years	Faculty Head and the Head of the Study Committee with support from Faculty Meeting

SUMMARY:

Fall 2021:

New dental units for the clinic has been approved by the management of the University of Iceland. They are estimated to be delivered during 2021. The new units will increase the quality of the clinical facilities and make a better working environment for the students.

Anaesthesia course – update the course. Student require the course to have more quality and go further into the subject. Faculty Head speaks with the teacher.

Course in Radiography – change the course to make it more structured for dental students and less interdisciplinary. Faculty Head speaks to the teacher.

Within 5 years:

Encourage faculty members to take diploma course in teaching and learning studies to improve their pedagogic skills. Faculty Head, Faculty Meeting.

Mandatory for students to work on research project (BS) – will increase research experience for students, research output by the faculty and increase funding to the faculty through research. This will need some change in the curriculum.

Faculty Head and the Head of the Study Committee with support from Faculty Meeting.

Action not possible to perform by the faculty:

It is important to get a faculty clinic at the new building to increase possibility for teachers to do their clinical work at the faculty instead of having to practice their clinical work outside the school to maintain their clinical competence.

The faculty has no possibility to perform this action, this needs to be discussed with the management of the University of Iceland.