UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND

Faculty of Psychology

SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES

SELF-REVIEW REPORT

January 2020

UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND

Introduction

This report is an abstract of the Self-Review Report of the Faculty of Psychology at the School of Health Sciences, University of Iceland and is intended for public disclosure at the University's website.

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 Psychology (henceforth the Faculty), School of Health Sciences (the School), University of Iceland (the University), carried out self-evaluation during the autumn semester of 2019. The results are presented in this report. A self-evaluation committee was established in June 2019 and meetings were held during fall of 2019.

The committee members were:

1. Dr. Daníel Þór Ólason Professor and Head of Faculty
2. Dr. Urður Njarðvík Professor and Vice Head of Faculty
3. Dr. Ragnar Pétur Ólafsson Associate Professor and programme coordinator for MS in clinical psychology.
4. Dr. Fanney Þórsdóttir Associate Professor and programme coordinator for MS in quantitative psychology.
5. Hrafnkatla Agnarsdóttir 2nd year MS-student in clinical psychology
6. María Lovísa Breiðdal 3rd year BS student
7. Hákon Sigursteinsson graduate of the Faculty and managing director of Child Protection Agency of Reykjavík
8. Ingiríður Þórisdóttir, departmental office director, committee secretary.

At the end of January 2019, the Faculty of Psychology received a visit from Áslaug Helgadóttir, director of quality management who introduced the self-review process. A first step in the self-review work was made in March and April of 2019, when the Faculty, with expert assistance from the staff at the Centre for Teaching and Learning, fully revised the learning outcomes of all study programmes and courses. In June, the Faculty committee had a short meeting with the Quality Committee of the University Council where the work ahead was discussed. On 14th of August 2019 the Faculty committee held its first meeting, completed a time schedule for the work ahead and discussed necessary additional data collection needed for the self-evaluation. Three international external reviewers from three different fields of Health sciences, including psychology (primary reviewer) reviewed the process of the self-evaluation work and the Faculty during the first week of October 2019.

The Self-Review Report is divided into three main parts. It firstly describes in detail the main Faculty characteristics including human resources, management structure, finance and short summary of students and study programmes. The faculties academic vision for both teaching and research is presented and local and international collaboration in teaching and research is discussed. Subsequently, student support is described. The second section includes a

thorough description of the study programmes available within the Faculty. The section is divided by academic degrees (BS, MS and PhD) and the focus was to discuss in detail the structure and content of each study programme and, to identify their strengths and weaknesses. Importantly, student opinions on each study programme was collected through student surveys, focus groups and meetings and their views are presented and discussed separately for each academic degree. The third section presents a description on lessons learned from QEF1 and to what extent the Faculty was able to implement the main projects and goals set in 2013. Subsequently, it summarizes conclusions for Faculty research and teaching and highlights the learnings made from the current self-evaluation process.

Faculty Characteristics

The Faculty of Psychology is the oldest psychology faculty in the country and the first to offer both undergraduate and graduate programmes in Psychology.

The Faculty offers six study programmes at the undergraduate and graduate levels (Appendix 1, Table 1). Apart from the now longstanding undergraduate programme and clinical graduate programme, the department commenced in 2017 a new MS in Applied Psychology, offering at first three different study specialities: MS in Quantitative psychology, MS in School and Development psychology and MS in Community and Health psychology (changed to Community and Environment psychology in 2019). In 2018, the Clinical Psychology programme was added for practical and professional reasons as the fourth speciality within the MS of applied psychology. The first PhD students in psychology were enrolled in 2007 and there has been a steady increase in the number of students entering the programme since.

Faculty staff is 22 in total, in 18.8 full time equivalent (FTE) positions (Appendix 1, Table 2). The current number of Faculty positions is 19 in 16.4 FTEs: one is director of the Faculty's Student Psychology Clinic, two are in 50% semi-retired positions, two are adjunct lecturers in 50% positions and one is employed 60% as Pro-rector at the University. The gender ratio within the Faculty has improved through the years for permanent staff as we have now 11 men (FTEs= 8.49) and 8 women (FTEs= 6.90). The Faculty is equally balanced with experienced and less experienced teaching staff. The Faculty enjoys a stable, committed faculty with almost zero job turnover rates as retirement is the main cause for leaving the Faculty.

The Faculty is, in terms of undergraduate student number, one of the larger faculties within the University with an average of about 500 undergraduate students over the last four years (Appendix 1, Table 3). The progress of students through the BS programme is quite satisfactory, with about 81% of those who fulfil the 2nd term requirements continuing their studies. The numbers for the MS programme are satisfactory, the retention rates are 99% and the completion rate for the clinical programme is 100%. The doctoral programme is relatively new for the Faculty and there has been a healthy increase in number of students entering the programme over the last 10 years. Completion rate is acceptable and in congruence with the completion rate of the University.

As of last academic year (2018-2019) the total number of students within the Faculty was 611; 528 undergraduate students, 67 master's students and 16 PhD students.

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 projects and goals set in the 2013 review.

a) In terms of Faculty key projects and goals the following applies:

The Faculty has seen some improvement in number of Faculty members. One faculty member who was in 50% semi-retired position fully retired and two have gone on to 50% semi-retired positions. Three new faculty members were hired and in the fall of 2013 the director for the psychology student clinic was hired. Thus, there is some improvement by 1.5 FTEs in academic positions but that has not had the desired effects on the teacher/student ratio. The Faculty intends to hire a new faculty member in 2020.

The Faculty has observed closely the experience of entrance exams within other faculties with high number of students and, based on that observation, the Faculty decided not to proceed with the entrance exams. There were concerns about the usefulness and validity of these entrance exams and they seem demotivating for prospective students. Further, funding issues for the BS programme is certainly also an obstacle for any revision leading to fewer students in the undergraduate programme

The first edition of a Faculty handbook on teaching was written in 2014 and subsequently revised in 2015. The Faculty intends to further revise and update the Handbook in 2020. The Faculty has not been able to secure increased funds for lab-work and research training for the BS programme but with the inclusion of the Clinical psychology programme in funding category 3, the prospects are more positive for clinical training.

b) In terms of the BS programme key projects and goals the following applies:

Most if not all core courses have teaching assistants for laboratory projects and discussion groups which is generally well received by students. The desired effect of increasing student feedback and teacher-student interactions in the programme is still not on acceptable levels probably resulting from the fact that the teacher/student ratio remains too high.

The Faculty has increased the flexibility within the programme, both by streamlining the 120 and 60 ECTS programmes and by allowing students to take either a smaller BS thesis (10 ECTS) or to take elective courses from a wide range of University courses instead of a final project. Several students have taken this route to graduation.

A special committee for the BS programme was established in 2014 and the role of student ombudsman with a seat on Faculty board was also established in 2014. This has worked well, and the student ombudsman is active in bringing students' concerns about the programme to the Faculty's attention.

c) In terms of the Master's programme's key projects and goals the following applies:

The administration of the MS in clinical psychology was delegated to a special graduate committee that reports to the Faculty board and important steps were taken in revising the clinical psychology programme was taken in 2013 and took effect in the fall of 2014. A part of this revision was to increase the clinical training hours within the newly established

Psychology student clinic, and this has now been realized. The clinic provides valuable services to the University community and has been well received. This, among other factors, has improved the image of the Faculty of Psychology within the University central administration and within the university student community.

The negotiations with the University Hospital on a cooperative contract for clinical training is still in progress, but students receive training there under supervision of experienced clinical psychologists. A seminar for final-project work is held every spring and the number of in-house projects is acceptable.

Finally, the goal of developing new master's programme in Applied psychology was realized in 2016 and the first students from the programme graduated in the spring of 2019.

Teaching and Learning

The Faculty operates ambitious and efficient study programmes including an undergraduate programme, a master's programme and a PhD programme. The Faculty has set in its Faculty handbook a teaching policy with clear goals for creating a culture of positive learning environment. The Faculty realizes that this is best achieved in a cooperation with students and the Faculty will continue to further develop its teaching policy to improve the educational experience of students in both undergraduate and graduate programmes.

The Faculty has recently revised the learning outcomes for all its courses and degree programmes. The Faculty intends to map the learning outcomes for courses to the programmes' learning outcomes during the academic year 2019 to 2020 and make necessary changes and amendments. The Faculty also receives annually surveys of BS, MS, PhD and graduated students and the Faculty annually reviews the course evaluations with student representatives and in employee interviews.

The Faculty has generated an action plan (see Appendix 2) that includes the main concerns raised by students in the undergraduate and graduate programmes. The Faculty intends to streamline and improve the efficiency of information flow from Faculty to BS students and make an effort to coordinate the workload between courses, mid-term exams and project delivery dates.

The Faculty continues to develop the MS in Applied psychology and look for ways to increase the number of courses available within different specialities. The Faculty has recently received financial support from the School of Health Sciences for a two-year Post-doc position and the person accepting this position will be expected to develop in cooperation with faculty members, a new master's programme in Perception and Cognitive science. All courses in the new master's programme will be taught in English to offer foreign students the possibility to apply to the programme and to facilitate exchange student cooperation with other universities. Further, in cooperation with the School of Education a new Diploma in the studies of behaviour analysis has been developed and will start in the fall of 2020.

The Faculty intends to develop further the student psychology clinic and will, in cooperation with the Icelandic Psychology Society, start discussions with the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture regarding the extended internship in the field. The Faculty will continue to seek

ways to strengthen the already promising PhD programme and look for ways to increase the percentage of fully funded PhD students.

Management of Research

The Faculty of Psychology has not written a research policy or defined any specific or general research strategies for the Faculty. It has also not monitored its progress in any formal way in terms of research output or impact. However, that does not mean that the Faculty has not paid any attention to research goals or impact. On the contrary, faculty members publish regularly in international journals, collaborate with international faculty members and researchers in many countries and their research has had an important role in several spheres of life and in promoting professional practice within the psychological community in Iceland. The Faculty also strongly supports the broad University policy on free pursuit of knowledge and scientific research that meets stringent ethical standards.

The research within the Faculty is diverse and varies between faculty members, often depending on available research time and external funding. Although there is a highly active research lab in Vision science the research programmes within the Faculty are to a large extent, individualized. In terms of research output (Appendix 1, Table 4), as defined and measured by the [Evaluation System for Public Universities in Iceland](), the Faculty is at or slightly below the averages found for both School of Health Sciences and the University. Most faculty members have research output every year, but there is a considerable variation between members, from being consistently below 10 points (one minor publication) each year to one of the highest scoring faculty member in the School of Health Sciences, with over a 100 research points every year

The Faculty acknowledges the need to generate a more formal research policy that will look onwards for opportunities to increase its research potentials. It intends to do so by: (1) enabling current faculty members to invest more time on their research projects, (2) expand into new and promising research topics through applicable recruiting and by (3) increase efforts to create strong research groups by encouraging more research cooperation between current members of Faculty and with future recruitment. Further, it is also regarded important that such a policy should continue to strengthen the already promising PhD and Masters programmes and look for ways to increase the number of applications for external funding.

Follow-up Processes

The implementation of the Action Plan will be a standing item on the Faculty Meetings. It will be reviewed formally every year and progress and changes formally noted in the records of the Faculty Meeting.

Faculty Head will report on the progress regularly to the School Board and to the School Dean on the status of the implementation and plans for next year, together with other relevant QA matters no later than December 1st 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 January 15th. The Quality Committee writes a short report to the Rector no later than February 1st, 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)
SÁL265 Psychology	1.2	BS	180
SÁL267 Psychology (with a minor)	1.2	BS	120
SÁL221 Psychology (as a minor)	1.2	BS	60
SÁL444 Applied Psychology	2.2	MS	120
SÁL441 Psychology (research)	2.2	MS	120
SÁL561 Psychology	3	PhD	180

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

Table 2. Faculty members as of 1 March 2019 and sessional teachers 2018, number (No.) and full time-equivalent (FTE)

	Men		Women		Total	
	No.	FTE	No.	FTE	No.	FTE
Professors	7	6.00	2	1.40	9	7.40
Associate Professors	2	2.00	4	4.00	6	6.00
Assistant Professors	0	0.00	1	1.00	1	1.00
Adjunct Lectures	1	0.50	1	0.50	2	1.00
Director of Student clinic	1	1.00	-	-	1	1.00
Total	11	9.50	8	6.90	19	16.40
Sessional teachers	23	2.43	59	5.91	82	8.34

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[4]	No. of graduates	Completion rate[5]
	Total no.	Full time[1]	Part time[2]				
BS-SÁL265/267/221	500	312	147	160	66/81	89	70
MS-SÁL444	49	46	3	25	99	20	100
PhD- SÁL561	13	9	-	4	-	1.25	75

[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	32.6	25.0	31.6	21.8	29.7	21.9	32.8	22.7	31.7	22.9
School	39.7	29.0	40.6	29.6	34.7	24.1	37.7	27.6	38.2	27.6
University	37.1	20.8	36.5	24.8	34.5	22.6	36.8	25.5	36.2	23.4

Appendix 2. Action Plan for Teaching and Learning in QEF2

	Actions	How	Deadlines	Responsible party

1. FACULTY LEVEL

Ch. 1.2	**Faculty Characteristics**			
1	New recruitment policy for 2020-2027-30	Appoint a recruitment committee	January 2020	Head of Faculty
2	Recruit new Faculty member	Seek approval for recruiting Assistant professor in Psychology and start recruitment if permitted	January 2020	Head of Faculty
3	Intake system for BS	BS committee explores and evaluates choices for Student intake	September 2020	BS committee
4	Funding	Seek more funding for special laboratory and research training in BS	September 2020	Head of Faculty
5	National and International applications for research grants	Obtain more support from the support services at the School of Health Sciences	May 2020	Head of Faculty
6	To reinforce available support for research activities within Faculty	Seek approval for hiring additional administrative staff in Faculty office	April 2020	Head of Faculty
7	Administrative load of faculty members	Examine the administrative load of faculty members and distribute as evenly as possible	June 2020	Head of Faculty
Ch. 1.3	**Academic Vision**			
1	Review and update the teaching policy for MS programme in applied psychology	Develop new strategy items into the Faculty policy that directly addresses the new programme in MS in applied psychology	May 2020	MS committee
2	Improve the culture of collective learning community	Establish regular special meetings with undergraduate and MS students to increase common understanding of the	Start in January 2020	Head of Faculty

		main aims of the study programmes		
3	Generate a sound research policy that includes clear strategic goals to improve research support for grant applications and research output	Appoint key Faculty members in a committee for the writing of research policy	February 2020	Head of Faculty
4	Enhance interaction and dialogue among the faculty concerning matters related to teaching	Establish the "teaching quarter "as a permanently scheduled item in bimonthly faculty meetings, to be excluded only in exceptional circumstances	Before end of year 2019	Head of Faculty; BS committee
5	Increase technology enhanced teaching and learning	Seek funding to support knowledge, skills, technology and training	December 2021	Faculty

2. STUDY PROGRAMMES

SÁL265/267/221 Psychology (BS 180/120/60 ECTS)

1	Examine learning outcome of courses with learning outcomes of BS programme.	Generate a learning outcome matrix for the BS programme	May 2020	Head of Faculty/BS committee
2	Examine the feasibility to record and upload all lectures in courses of the BS programme	Collect evidence for the usefulness of recording in the literature and consult the center for teaching and learning	September 2020	Head of Faculty/BS committee
3	Coordinate as well as possible mid-term exams and project dates for all courses in the same term	Before start of each term, teachers meet and coordinate their syllabus schedule	January 2020	BS committee/Faculty Office
4	Check assessment methods of courses for homogeneity (overuse of Multiple-choice questions)	Use the learning outcome matrix to evaluate assessment methods	May 2020	Head of Faculty/BS committee
5	Examine teaching practices and the availability of practical and discussion tutorials	Use the learning outcome matrix to evaluate laboratory/discussion groups for each course	May 2020	Head of Faculty/BS committee

6	Improve the communication flow from Faculty to students regarding deadlines for BS Thesis, timetables for discussion and laboratory tutorials	Revise the Faculty website and enter special site for improved communication	March 2020	Head of Faculty/BS committee/ Faculty office
7	Improve information on exchange studies	Enter a special site on Faculty website with information	March 2020	Faculty office
8	Improve student possibilities to interact with teachers	All teachers will have published contact hours (on Faculty website)	January 2020	Faculty Head/Faculty office
9	Examine workload of courses in the programme	Use the learning outcome matrix to evaluate workload of courses	May 2020	Head of Faculty
10	Review order of courses within the program, course content and replications	Use the learning outcome matrix to evaluate order, content and replications between courses	May 2020	Head of Faculty

SÁL444 Applied Psychology (MS 120 ECTS)

Specialties of Quantitative, School and Developmental and Social and environment

1	Examine learning outcome of courses with learning outcomes of BS programme.	Generate a learning outcome matrix for the MS programme	May 2020	Head of Faculty/MS committee
2	Evaluate feasibility for more courses in the programme	Use the learning outcome matrix for the MS programme to evaluate need for more selection of courses in congruence with financing of the Programme	September 2020	MS committee
3	Support graduate student community	Organize more social events and encourage more involvement of students	May 2020	Faculty and student association
4	Increase the number of international students	Improve the webpage, offer more courses in English	September 2022	MS committee
5	Examine and coordinate the workload of courses	Use the learning outcome matrix for the MS programme to	May 2020	Head of Faculty/MS committee

		examine workload between courses		
6	Develop learning outcomes for MS thesis	Write learning outcomes for MS thesis	May 2020	MS committee

SÁL444 Applied Psychology (MS 120 ECTS)

Specialty of Clinical Psychology

1	Examine learning outcome of courses with learning outcomes of MS clinical programme.	Generate a learning outcome matrix for the MS clinical programme	May 2020	Head of Faculty/MS committee
2	Explore the need/benefit for external review of the programme (content, teaching, training)	Discussion in MS committee in clinical psychology in association with Faculty	September 2021	Programme leader, MS committee in clinical psychology
3	Compare content of adults vs. child/adolescent track in terms of topics covered (e.g. clinical neuropsychology) and make relevant changes	Use the learning outcome matrix to compare contents of clinical tracks	September 2020	Programme leader, MS committee in clinical psychology
4	Secure responsibility of and consistency in courses not presently covered by Faculty members (e.g. clinical neuropsychology, ethics in psychological practice)	Explore the possibility to hire a new member of Faculty to cover clinical neuropsychology	September 2021	Head of Faculty
5	Establish criteria of content in intra- and extramural internships	Use the learning outcome matrix to improve intra-and extramural internships	May 2020	Programme leader, MS committee in clinical psychology
6	Develop assessment procedure further for clinical training in intra- and extramural internships	Implement the use of structured evaluations of therapy skills	May 2021	Programme leader, MS committee in clinical psychology

SÁL561 Psychology (PhD 180 ECTS)

1	Improve student satisfaction with facilities to 80%	Meet with student representatives and discuss the facilities since the move in late 2018. Address any subsequent concerns	Next two surveys by Social Science Research Institute	Head of Faculty, Head of Faculty Doctoral Committee

2	Assess the need for formal Faculty orientation for new students	Meet with student representatives and discuss the need for orientation. Address any subsequent concerns	January 2020	Head of Faculty, Head of Faculty Doctoral Committee
3	Increase percentage of PhD students completing degree within 3.5 years	Monitor closely progress of all PhD students with special focus on those who have completed 2 years of study. Provide reminders and support in completing interim evaluations timely.	January 2023	Head of Faculty Doctoral Committee and Coordinator of Doctoral Studies (Faculty Office)
4	Increase percentage of fully funded students	Increasing assistance and support with grant applications	2023	Research coordinator for School of Health Sciences and Head of Faculty
5	Increase support for grant applications	Ensure that services from the research coordinator reach the Faculty of Psychology	2020	Head of the Faculty and research coordinator
6	Increase the number of faculty members who supervise PhD students	Encourage younger faculty members to recruit PhD students and provide guidance and support to new supervisors	2021	Head of Faculty, Head of Faculty Doctoral Committee