

Political document on educational quality

The political document on educational quality concerns the Student Organization of Agder's (STA) policies, which can contribute to an increase of the educational quality at the University of Agder (UiA).

Educational quality is of a great importance when it comes to the continuation of research through a meaningful education. This contributes to a development of the society.

The collective work is important when it comes to ensuring educational quality. Due to this, the document emphasizes student participation and student affiliation to the working life.

This document concerns STA's policies on subject and research, and the measurements presented in the document shall contribute to increased educational quality in the institution.

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1. The principle of no tuition fees

The principle of free education shall secure everyone equal opportunity for education and needs to be something to take for granted in Norwegian higher education. UiA shall ensure the principle of no tuition fees for all its students, including international students who study in Norway and students who do not study physically on campus.

The university shall maintain the principle of no tuition fees and do not support scholarships that favours students that finish their studies on standard time.

Lånekassen must have schemes to ensure that Norwegian students can study abroad, this independently from social- economic backgrounds.

Work placement must be organised in a way that does not give students unreasonable financial consequences.

1.1 Costs associated with the study

In cases where students may experience costs associated with the study, information must be given sufficient information in advance. If the study programme uses software that can only be used on certain types of technical solutions, the students must be informed about this early in the study programme so they can buy the correct equipment.

One must work toward giving students the possibility to buy used books without it overpassing possible access codes or other necessary digital resources.

If teaching outside of campus brings about extra costs for students, UiA must facilitate for an alternative on campus.

UiA must ensure that the students receive sufficient information about costs when considering work placement abroad. UiA must cover unpredicted costs tied to the work placement that are not covered by *Lånekassen*.

In cases where lectures require mandatory equipment, the university must be expected to offer good and reasonable deals. Equipment that is offered by the university must be of good quality and be accessible in sufficient quantum.

1.2 Open Access

All research, financed with public funds, shall preferably be publicised openly accessible for all.

UiA shall work to ensure that open access to public financed research is a good for the society.

UiA shall ensure support to academic employees and students to make research accessible og clear in open channels.

1.3 Commercialisation of higher education

Education shall be a right and not a merchandise. STA shall support the commitment towards the role of higher education in Norwegian development policy. With a global perspective, STA shall support the work for an increased quality assurance of higher education and the work towards higher education being financed by the public at a larger scale.

2. Academia's social responsibility

2.1 Social responsibility

Education, research and innovation are important for building and further developing the society. Academia must therefore be able to respond to the challenges facing society, both regionally, nationally and internationally.

Academia must be aware of their responsibility and make visible in what way they respond to the challenges society faces and actively take part in the public debate both regionally and nationally. The university shall work to participate in international public debate.

Academia, together with the everyone around, must ensure that people can learn throughout life to meet the challenges of the future.

UiA shall promote critical and independent thinking and challenge the established western view of knowledge. Through their education, students shall be able to identify skewed power structures.

Researches at UiA shall be aware of the western perspective they often bring into research and dissemination, and balance this against the international and minority perspectives as far as can be done in their fields.

UiA shall increase Norway based students' and academics' knowledge about one sided and non-inclusive dissemination of knowledge.

2.2 Decorum

Higher education shall participate to the academic sense of decorum. Progressing in decorum refers to qualities that can contribute to positive societal development. These include qualifications to develop analytical skills, understand critical thinking and contribute to the development of professional ethical sense. This shall give the students tools to ask critical questions in the development of academia and the society.

Decorum is part of the maturing process from pupil to student. Thus, decorum helps to ensure a smooth transition for students between upper secondary school and higher education. All first-year students at the university shall complete courses that develop the general sense of decorum.

The university plays an important part in offering academic and social guidance, communicating expectations to being a student, making information accessible and ensuring clear communication on different platforms.

2.3 Academic freedom

In Norwegian academia, there must be academically autonomous institutions that value academic freedom. It is especially important to protect students' and employees' freedom of expression, rights, and academic freedom. Academia should be an active participant in the common public debate.

UiA shall contribute to, and defend, students' and employees' freedom to expression and academic freedom. UiA and STA must take greater responsibility for condemning violations of academic freedom and help create a safe arena for diversity of opinion.

To help ensure academic freedom in the world, programmes such as Scholars at Risk and Students at Risk must be continued, expanded and secured more public funding.

STA supports the work of establishing Student Advocacy Seminars in collaboration with Scholars at Risk.

As a part of the international student movement, STA shall be a solidary contributor in cases where students' rights are restricted or threatened. Therefore, the Students at Risk programme must be implemented in more countries, in the same way as the Scholars at Risk programme.

2.4 Academic community

All activity at the university shall be an equal cooperation between students and employees. The goal is to achieve an academic community with accessible meeting places for knowledge exchange and professional discussion where all participants experience equality. Students must thus be considered equal participants in the academic community.

The students shall be seen as partners in the work to further develop the university. They shall have a central and significant role in councils and organs that prepare, design, and evaluate things that takes place at the university. The university shall facilitate for student participation and ensure a well-run student democracy. Student representation required by law shall be considered a minimum.

2.5 A sustainable society

UiA has a responsibility to be a sustainable institution which promotes sustainable thinking and knowledge. UiA, as a large institution in the region, but also as an educational institution, has a responsibility to show the way for the rest of society. This shall be done through research and education, but also through own practice.

UiA must work purposefully and systematically to contribute to achieve the UN's sustainability goals by 2030.

UiA must join the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI).

UiA shall take part in the collective effort to facilitate that refugees coming to Norway are able to continue their higher education here and be included in the academic environment.

It must be possible for asylum seekers to continue their education in Norway while waiting to have their asylum application processed.

2.6 Lifelong learning

Learning is continuous and lasts one's whole life. Higher education shall not be seen as something to be completed before working life. The students must be able to study more when they wish to, both ordinary study programmes and continuing and further education.

UiA must be a role model in promoting positive attitudes for continuous learning for their students and employees. It is important to create arenas for further learning and dissemination of research for the public in the university's region.

The university shall facilitate that people of all ages can participate in higher education. Age and previous education shall not be an obstacle for studying. Variation in the age groups amongst the students can be a benefit for learning. Older students are equal students and shall have access to modules at the university

equally to other students.

3. Study quality

UiA shall have motivational study programmes of high academic quality.

The management on all levels at UiA shall prioritise educational quality in distribution of resources, strategy, and communication.

To ensure continuous study quality, all students must be offered an introduction to research understanding, scientific methods, source use and research ethics early in their studies.

3.1 Learning outcome

Descriptions of the learning outcome shall clearly describe the competence and qualities students will gain throughout their studies. These descriptions shall be meaningful for lecturers and students and show others what the student knows after completion of the education.

All description must be developed in a close cooperation between the scientific employees, students, and relevant groups from the working life and thus help increase the quality of the study programme. They shall be clear, updated and easily accessible for all study programmes.

3.2 Syllabus

UiA shall strive to have syllabus, lectures and research that reflects the diversity when it comes to understanding the world, knowledge, and power.

All subjects shall have a syllabus that is time current. The syllabus must contain updated research and knowledge that has relevance for the subject and that gives an interdisciplinary competence.

UiA shall strive for a comprehensive offer of a digital syllabus. E-books and e-compendiums shall be available in all modules where this is possible.

The university library shall ensure that older syllabus literature is available for loan.

In institutions where employees set up their own literature in the syllabus, this must be approved by the immediate manager.

3.3 Lectures

The lectures shall be engaging and of high quality. It shall also meet STA's standards for a good learning environment.

All lectures at UiA shall be based on research. This includes student active research and lectures based on the foremost in research, academic and artistic development work and experience-knowledge.

Each study programme shall facilitate for learning through research. Active researchers shall be invited to present their research projects for students at degree programmes.

There must be room for academic conversation between students and lecturers in a lecture situation.

The university shall stimulate academic collaboration between the students. The university shall mainly arrange for attendance at physical lectures, but the university must have good solutions for digital lectures and hybrid solutions.

If the number of students increases the access to lecturers and other resources must also increase.

There must be a correspondence between the workload and study points. Each study point shall have approximately the same workload attached to it.

UiA shall be a university who leads the way when it comes to digitalisation and using digital tools. Digitalisation shall be done to strengthen the academic quality and ability where it is appropriate.

The university must secure that students' and employees' digital competence is sufficient and offer courses when necessary. Use and choice of digital tools in the education should be corresponding with what is used in working life and help students develop relevant digital skills.

3.4 The lecturer

Lecturers shall possess a high competence when it comes to pedagogy, didactics, and digital teaching methods, as well as academic competence in their field to ensure high educational quality.

All lectures must have a sufficient competence when it comes to relevant teaching languages.

The lecturer shall have an approach to own lecturing based on research. They shall be aware of what teaching methods that are expedient to the subject.

There must be a comprehensive thinking between research and teaching. Therefore, the employees must do both.

Development of competence and teaching should be part of the requirements for employment or promotion from one scientific position to another. Employees should be offered time from the university to improve lectures in the same way as research time.

A system of merit shall be established to premiere skilled lectures to create a positive rumour about time priority when it comes to improvement of educational quality.

3.5 Clear communication

In all communication with students, the university must ensure correct, relevant, and updated information that are given the students in good time and is for the students best. The university must ensure that students are aware of the guidance opportunities they have through study counselling and UiA Career. Necessary and

correct information shall always be available for all students at the university. Information shall be available in Norwegian, Sami and English. Screens and signs shall be used to promote information for students.

All information for students must be made available digitally. Students, STA and student activities must be able to share information to fellow students by using the same platforms as the university.

Administration of lecture rooms, group study rooms and common areas must be available and clear, and they must be easy to book.

There shall always be an updated academic calendar available on the university's website.

The semester plan and literature for each module shall be made available on semester start. Where the literature is similar in several modules, this must be made visible.

Exam dates shall be made public as soon as they are ready. This includes ordinary and postponed exams, as well as changes to the exam date.

3.6 International accreditation

The university shall work to gain international accreditation where this is possible. The goal with accreditation should be to increase the quality in the academic environment, as well as gaining more international students and employees.

4. A future oriented education

UiA shall educate students who are ready for the society and working life of the future. Educations must reflect competences that are needed in society.

UiA shall facilitate that students can use their knowledge to create their own workplace. To do so, the university shall run an incubator for innovation for students. This must be made available to all students, regardless of their study field. There must be made groups to cultivate cutting-edge expertise and develop talents across the professional environments.

4.1 Interdisciplinary education

Interdisciplinary understanding and experience is an important part of a future oriented education. Students shall be able to actively shape their own study, by creating breadths of technical competence in other academic directions.

UiA shall focus on the development and establishment of modules, breadths of technical competence, etc. that gather students together across subject areas and/or faculties/units in order to increase interdisciplinary competence.

4.2 Relevance for the working life

Relevance for the working life shall be consistent when it comes to the planning and shaping of studies and modules within all study programmes. The university, by the faculties and teacher education unit, shall evenly revise their methods for improvement of relevance for the working life in all study programs.

All studies at UiA shall have contents which are relevant for today's and future working life. There must, as far as possible, be a clear link between studies at UiA and working life.

UiA shall have a special focus on working life in the Agder region. The university must take an active role in ensuring good contact and cooperation between regional working and business life, students, and academic environments. This can be done by, for example, using guest lecturers. The person responsible for the module is responsible for the quality.

UiA shall encourage and facilitate that students can write assignments in collaboration with working life.

UiA should provide information about opportunities for a career in academia. UiA should develop a recruitment plan for future researchers amongst its students.

4.2.1 Work placement.

All degree studies at UiA shall have professional training in work placements or trainee programmes on offer during the course of study. It is expected that all professional training affiliated with UiA is quality ensured and relevant and that they give the students a good learning outcome. The university shall also actively further develop the existing professional training schemes.

UiA shall offer the professional training businesses courses on guidance competence. All supervisors of professional training affiliated with UiA shall have supervision competence and be suited to supervise students of professional training.

UiA must ensure that all professional training businesses, the students and the university are aware of the expectations from both ends.

Parents with children under the age of 16, single parents, students who are politically active, student voluntary work, elite athletes, and others with special needs receive a place of professional training close to their place of living if applied for.

Students at risk of failing their work placement must be informed within a reasonable time to be able to change unwanted behaviour.

Students in work placement shall have the same rights as presented in the Working Environment Act.

4.2.2 UiA Alumni

UiA shall have an arena for communication, networking, and interaction between current and former students. This is to help current students communicate working life opportunities, give the university a way to maintain contact with former students, and ensure that former students can remain up to date on relevant research as a part of their own career development.

4.2.3 Contact with the working life

UiA and STA shall work with student activities and working life to create an annual

career week at the university. This shall work as a meeting place for students, businesses, and academic environments. The purpose is to increase the relevance for working life at the study programme by increasing the university's understanding of working life and working life's understanding of the university. This shall also work as an arena to establish contact between students and future partners for assignments and possible work placements, part time jobs, summer jobs and/or workplaces.

UiA shall have a virtual meeting place between students and working life. Businesses can here present proposals for themes and assignments students can further work on as a part of their studies. Students shall also be able to publish themes/subjects they are working on that businesses can engage in.

4.2.4 Career counselling

UiA shall have an advisory organ which can guide students on future career opportunities. This organ shall offer relevant courses and arrangements that can prepare the students for life after studies.

UiA's academic environment shall also acquire competence in career counselling to strengthen the relevance for working life in study- and assignment counselling.

4.3 Continuing and further education

Continuing and further education (EVU for short in Norwegian) is packages of courses and subjects put together to meet a concrete need from the working life. The EVU-offer shall contribute to a development for competence which meets the needs of the society and working life, in addition to facilitating for personal growth for the individual. These packages are put together considering earlier studies and experiences from the work life.

EVU must be prepared in cooperation with the working life. It shall be facilitated for development of competence and career for employees through their whole careers.

Good schemes for EVU are an important part of the university's work for lifelong learning.

EVU-modules can be shorter entities and single modules that are being used to update and get a "refill" of competence. These should also work as interdisciplinary offers.

4.3.1 Financing

The EVU-offers shall not be financed by study place financing allocated study places at ordinary study programs.

To achieve a cost effective and sustainable solution for EVU, it must be facilitated for local and regional offers.

As a main rule, ordinary subjects at UiA should be accessible for EVU-students at the same financial basis as other students but program students shall always have precedence.

5. Assessment

Assessment shall be looked upon as a part of the learning process and must thus be reflected on the expected learning outcome and be promotive for competence building.

Students shall be handed their exam papers without mistakes and of high quality in line with literature and research. Reuse of exams shall be avoided.

5.1 Ways of assessment

Students should experience a variety of assessment forms throughout their studies to gain overall qualities. Throughout a degree programme, there shall be examinations with at least three different forms of assessment.

Traditional school exams without any support material and 1-day exams shall be phased out as a usual form of examination. This shall be done because it reflects the skills students shall develop for future work and community participation in a poor way.

STA supports the development of new and innovative ways of assessment. This means one should explore forms that give students a selection of different ways of assessment and better the use of assessment forms like student participation, folder submission, and oral assessment.

For the exam to be an active part of the learning process, the university shall facilitate for assessment forms and questions that stimulate critical thinking and that uses literature and empiricism instead of just reproducing facts.

The assessment forms should facilitate for students to be able to go through the process of producing, reflecting, analysing, working on, and bettering their work. This to cultivate good learning.

There shall be written feedback on all mandatory assignments to every single student/group, more than just "approved/not approved".

5.2 Obligatory hand in

The scope of the obligatory hand ins must be seen in connection with the quantity of study points for each subject and the purpose of the hand ins. Students shall receive constructive feedback on all mandatory hand-ins. These shall be spread throughout the semester.

There must be a connection between the mandatory hand-ins and final assessment in each module. Mandatory hand-ins shall build necessary competence for the students to be able to hand in successful exams, like correct sourcing.

5.3 Examination

The university shall make sure that all students can complete the examination on an equal basis.

Digital examination shall be the standard when it comes to written exams. Students, lecturers and exam invigilators must be given sufficient competence when it comes to

completing the exam. Technical challenges must never affect the students' attempt to do the exam or be a disadvantage for students or employees.

All written exams, except for bachelor's degrees and masters shall be anonymised. This is done by using a candidate number.

It is expected that students get a minimum of two days between each exam. For modules that run in parallel line on several campuses, the exam shall be held on the same day with similar exam papers and frames.

5.4 Postponed exams

Students shall have the right to postponed exams.

If ordinary and postponed exams collide, the university shall facilitate that both exams can be carried out.

If a student is on exchange (either at a university or as a work placement) when the postponed examination is being carried out, the university must facilitate for it to be carried out abroad.

5.5 Larger academic assignments

Academic assignments include bachelor and master thesis's and other academic work of greater scope and assessment.

Students shall receive a regular and individual follow-up and guidance while working on academic assignments. The follow-up and guidance shall be carried out in a good professional and pedagogic manner. The supervisor shall have competence on supervision.

The guidance shall help increase the student's learning outcome and must thus include assessment and feedback throughout and after the work.

5.6 Censoring

Anyone who participates in censoring of exams and academic work of great scope shall get thorough training.

The censor guidance shall be available for and be thoroughly introduced to all censors. The censor guidance shall be in line with the learning outcome and syllabus for each module.

The deadlines for assessment on assignments and exams shall be held by students, employees and examiners affiliated with UiA. The university shall establish initiatives that secures that the deadlines are being upheld. If the deadlines are not being upheld, the students shall be informed well in advance.

5.7 Justification

There shall always be a written justification when it comes to the given grade. This concerns both the letter grade and passed/not passed. The justification shall contribute to the students' learning process and give a clear picture of the

candidates' performance and potential for improvement. The written justification shall be given in addition to an oral justification after an oral or practical examination.

5.8 Right of appeal

In a process of appeal the students shall receive a new and independent assessment where the appeals body has no knowledge of the earlier grade. The process of appeal must be quality ensured evenly and the routines for better censoring and handling of appeals shall always be evaluated. In cases where a new assessment causes a change of more than two grades the student shall receive a third independent assessment without the earlier grades being known. This assessment shall be final.

In cases where there is an appeal concerning group exams there shall be given an individual right to appeal.

It must be possible to appeal on the assessment of oral and practical exams, not only on the formal circumstances.

6. Student exchange

Student exchange is an important part of the study experience in order to gain a multicultural understanding, international perspective and also for the unique academic offers. UiA and the International Office should focus on the academic benefits of exchange when developing partner agreements and promoting exchange opportunities.

Exchange students, both incoming and outgoing, must be seen as an important contributor to increased internationalisation.

Before students and employees travel abroad, they should be given the opportunity to acquire intercultural understanding in order to give the students the best possible basis for traveling abroad.

There must be a goal that a minimum of 50% of students at UiA have an exchange year during their studies. This goal shall not negatively affect the quality assurance of the exchange's academic level, UiA's follow-up or the students' benefits from the stay.

UiA shall uphold and improve a green travel grant for students travelling on an environmentally friendly to and from their exchange point.

6.1 Information and guidance

UiA and the International Office are responsible to provide correct and good information and guidance to students who are considering going or are going abroad on exchange year. Information about existing offers for exchange and international work placement must be easily accessible and must be informed about in the first semester and again in the third semester. This to ensure that students can make an early and informed decision about exchange.

It is important that the university facilitates sufficient guidance on how international experience can best fit into the study programme.

There must be a clear division of responsibilities between the international office and the faculties and the teacher education unit, so that the students receive the best possible guidance.

The university shall put on an international week focusing on promoting exchange. International students and STA shall be included in this work.

UiA, led by the International Office, must to a much greater extent promote Nordic and European exchange. The focus should be on the economic and sustainable benefits of these exchange places.

UiA should promote and show exchange opportunities through the European University Alliance.

6.2 Deals and quality assurance

UiA shall facilitate that all degree programmes shall be able to offer a development window in the study plan. This shall not be at the expense of the opportunity for work placement.

UiA shall strive for active deregistration for exchange. Students should be able to easily deregistrate thorough digital portals.

Shorter exchange stays under three months should also count as exchange. This can be combined with virtual exchange.

Exchange agreements the university has must be regularly quality assured.

UiA shall work to establish more agreements on international work placements with institutions and businesses.

It must be possible for students to go on exchange to institutions UiA does not have agreements with, as long as the institution follow certain guidelines.

Students who are on, or returning from exchange or work placement, should be given the opportunity to share experiences and evaluate their stay.

6.3 Follow-up

Students who are abroad shall be secured sufficient guidance and follow-up from UiA before, during and after the exchange period. UiA must secure good communication between UiA and the relevant exchange institution so that the students get sufficient follow-up.

All students shall have a contact person from UiA and a contact person at the exchange institution.

UiA must develop good guidelines for how to handle situations that arise during the exchange or international work placement period, and secure clear distribution of responsibility. This must be communicated to the students before and during the stay.

6.4 International student ambassadors

A scheme where international students can be student ambassadors for UiA at international institutions shall be established. This to promote the study possibilities at UiA in a better way.

A system for student ambassadors for exchange must be established. Students who have already been on an exchange can be used as an ambassador for the exchange university/institution at UiA. They can also be used in short employment missions for the International Office.

7. Students and research

Research is a vital part of the function of the university; therefore, the students should receive good information and more possibilities to be engaged in UiA`s research.

UiA has a responsibility to enlighten the student on the possibilities for a career in academia through PHD-educations.

The university should have PHF-educations of a high quality on offer within all areas of subjects that offer a master`s degree. PHDs shall be offered in cooperation with both the working life and the public sector.

7.1 Academic integrity and research quality

UiA has a responsibility to make sure that all researchers and students has a high academic integrity, and a responsibility for that the research is being conducted with the greatest possible transparency and verifiability.

Everyone who researches has a responsibility to see their work in the context of the rest of the society. Production of knowledge must therefore be done in an environment with critical reflection on how research methods and research results influence the society, contemporary and people.

UiA`s cooperation with the working life and other external actors shall be transparent. To ensure this, there shall be a public overview showing external financing of research being done at the university.

Everyone who researches shall receive training in proper handling of research data. UiA has a responsibility to facilitate for access to safe storage possibilities.

UiA should be active in the work for developing an international research community. Cooperation on research and education that benefits the students shall be established.

7.2 Publications of student work

The university shall encourage and facilitate for the students being able to publish their master`s thesis through the university`s portals.

The university shall encourage the students to rewrite their academic work into academic articles. The university should have support and guidance schemes for this.

7.3 Student active research

All students shall have the possibility to be involved in research projects on both bachelor and master`s level. The faculties and teacher education unit shall ensure this possibility, and make sure that the students are informed about this.

Every study shall make sure that the students receive experience with execution and implementation on research projects within the subject area in question.

The students at the master`s level shall be given the opportunity to be a part of research groups. The university must facilitate that all students can do research in addition to their studies and take initiative to start their own research projects.

UiA should have their own research studies as a part of their study portfolio of offer. It can be integrated in the existing studies or as an alternative to ordinary course of study

7.4 Research support for students

The university shall have scientific resources available for students and employees. This includes available data bases, tools for collecting material and courses and resources within academic writing. There shall be a low threshold for using these.

8. Quality culture

UiA shall have a professional environment of high quality and a clear profile. The university must have an ambition to have professional environments of high national and international quality. The university shall actively work towards regional, national, and international incentive programs and centre schemes that can contribute to an increase of quality among the professional environments.

Students and employees shall all contribute to a development of quality in the education and research, via evaluations and feed-back.

The students' knowledge on their own learning and learning outcome shall be emphasized when it comes to assessment of educational quality. The students shall be given the opportunity to actively participate in the work for raising the quality of their own everyday study life.

The Quality Ensurance System at the university shall distribute responsibility for the educational quality clearly between the different management levels at the university, in addition to delegate the responsibilities through different mandates and instructions to the employees. The students shall be heard in cases that concerns the development of study programs.

8.1 Development and innovation

UiA shall facilitate for innovation for all that are affiliated with the institution. All study programs shall encourage innovation towards current issues. It should be possible for students to use their innovation work in the lectures. Especially this should be facilitated for in degree-granting tasks as bachelor and master`s theses.

UiA shall facilitate for development of cutting-edge expertise and talents both among employees and students. Extraordinary efforts and good results must be encouraged and recognized.

UiA shall actively facilitate for that the students have room to develop their own competence. The university shall, as far as possible, contribute to that this competence is fully developed.

Employees and students at UiA shall contribute to innovation within both the private and public sector. This can be done through co-creation together with ideal organizations and the working life.

Both students and employees shall have the opportunity to cooperate on realizing new ideas.

9. Organisation and frame factors of higher education

Frame factors is the factors that influence the educational quality and the everyday study life of the students but does not include professional quality in the education or research.

9.1 Admissions for higher education

The university must take into consideration the society`s need for competence when it comes to admission and the establishment of new study places.

Admission to the university shall be in accordance with what the student is expected to manage through their studies. If the entrance exams are changes, this must be reflected through the tuition. If UiA has accepted an exception from the entrance exams, the university must take responsibility for that the student does not fall behind due to theoretical or technical basis affiliated with the entrance exam.

The university shall strengthen the possibility for alternative entrance schemes, including entrance exams and so on.

The university shall ensure access to higher education for students with another basic competence than general study competence. Especially the three- semester scheme (*TRES*) and the *Y-veien* shall be strengthened.

Concerning the local admission, the university shall give an answer as soon as possible when it comes to further education, continuing education, and higher degree programs.

9.2 Centre for Excellence in Education Initiative (SFU) and Centre for Excellence in Research (SFF)

SFU and SFF affiliated with the university shall contribute to innovative learning and research and increase the general educational and research quality. STA shall support the university's work towards maintaining existing centres and the establishment of new centres both within research and education within the institution.

9.3 Autonomy and model of management

The university shall have a large organizational autonomy and a full educational autonomy to ensure a good education and free research.

Primary financing shall be done through public funds and in accordance with a finance model that gives the university predictability.

UiA's campuses are equal, and the university shall ensure a good cooperation and division of labour between these.

The university's rectorate shall be elected, and the students shall have the voting rights in this election.

Representation of the students shall be ensured in all collegial organs at the university. These representatives shall be equal with the other members and have a real influence.

9.4 Drop out from higher education

The university must chart the causes of the student drop out and prepare a local action plan that prevent drop out from higher education. In addition to an action plan with concrete measures, the university must facilitate flexible and simple transition arrangements between studies if a student wants to switch studies.

9.5 Student Ombudsman

All students at the University of Agder shall have access to a Student Ombudsman.

The Student Ombudsman shall be an independent assistance person who shall give the students at the university help and guidance in cases that involves their study situation.

The Student Ombudsman shall ensure that cases receive a responsible and correct treatment and that the students' rights are being taken care of.

The university shall have the employer responsibility and the Student Ombudsman shall possess legal competence.

The Student Ombudsman shall report directly to the university board and UiA's Learning Environment Committee (LMU)

The Student Ombudsman is not subjected to the duty of loyalty but must have a duty of confidentiality.

The Student Ombudsman shall put forward a yearly report that shows the scope of inquiries but also put forward clear recommendations on how the university shall ensure the students` legal safety and rights in a better way.

9.6 Local regulation

UiA shall pass their own regulation on the learning environment that is applicable at the university.

Today`s legislation is a minimum for the regulation and shall consist of the five current perspectives on the learning environment: physical, psychosocial, digital, organizational, and pedagogical.

STA shall be a part in the work with making this regulation.

UiA must improve the local regulation concerning extenuating circumstances when it comes to cheating.

9.7 National Curriculum

It is expected that UiA relates to the national curriculum when it comes to vocational educations with practise.

National part exams shall only be used when it comes to framework educations.

The results from the national part exams shall not be put on the diploma and shall only be used for internal evaluations at an institutional level.

Passed on 27th of April 2022