Forskningsrådet

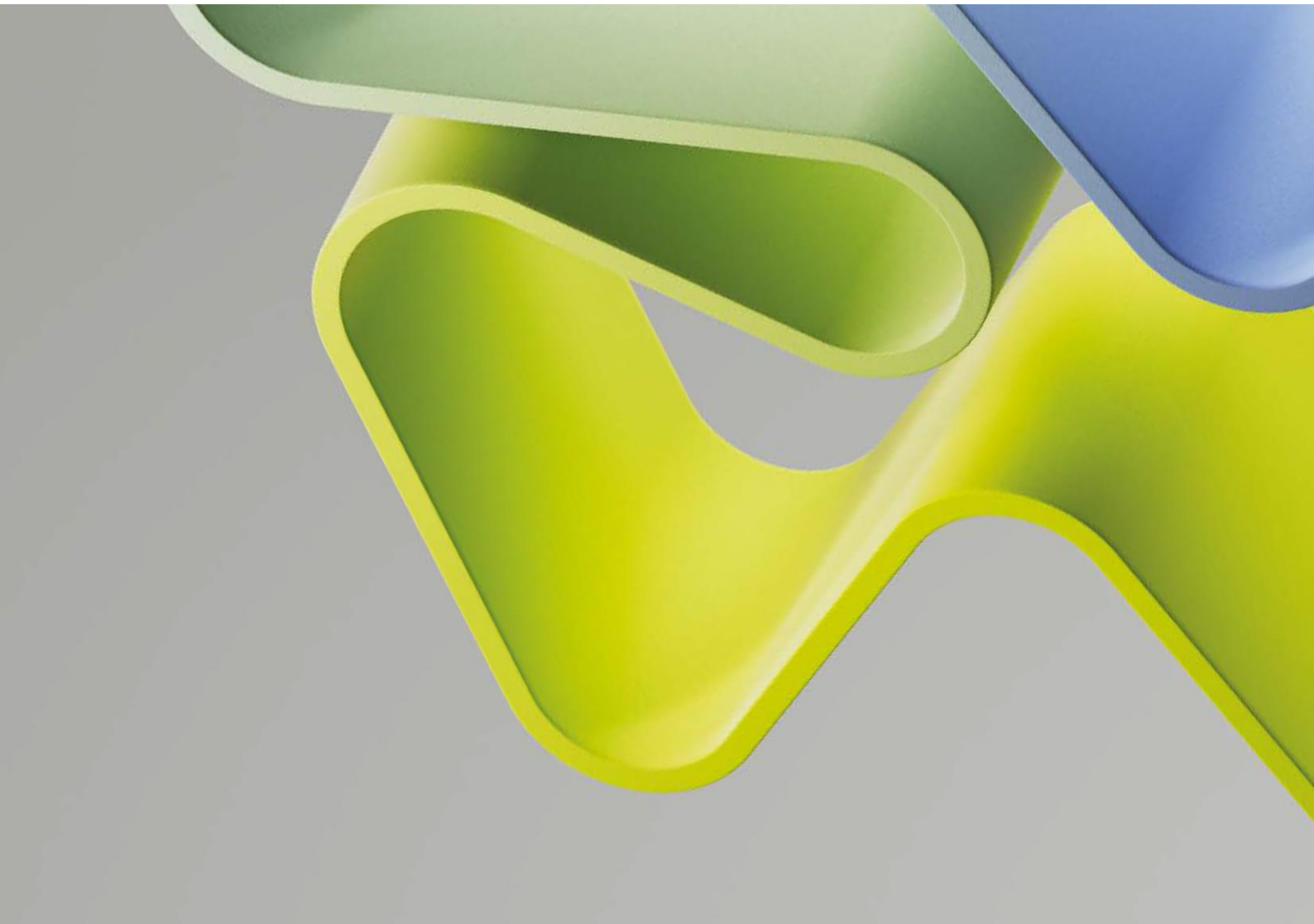
Evaluation of Life Sciences 2022-2024

Evaluation of medicine and health 2023-2024

Evaluation report

ADMIN UNIT: Faculty of Health and Sport Sciences
INSTITUTION: University of Agder (UiA)

December 2024



Contents

Statement from Evaluation Committee Higher Education Institutions 4

This report is from Evaluation Committee Higher Education Institutions 4 which evaluated the following administrative units representing the higher education sector in the Evaluation of medicine and health 2023-2024:

- Faculty of Health Sciences and Social Care, Molde University College
- Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, NTNU
- Faculty of medicine and Health Sciences, NTNU,
- Department of Clinical Dentistry (IKO), UiT Arctic University of Norway
- Department of Community Medicine, UiT Arctic University of Norway
- Department of Medical Biology (IMB), UiT Arctic University of Norway
- Faculty of Health and Sport Sciences, University of Agder (UiA)
- Department of Global Public Health and Primary Care, University of Bergen (UiB)

The conclusions and recommendations in this report are based on information from the administrative units (self-assessment), digital meetings with representatives from the administrative units, bibliometric analysis and personnel statistics from the Nordic Institute for Studies of Innovation, Research, and Education (NIFU) and Statistics Norway (SSB), and selected data from Studiebarometeret (NOKUT). The digital interviews took place in Autumn 2024.

This report is the consensus view from committee Higher Education Institutions 4. All members of the committee have agreed with the assessments, conclusions and recommendations presented here.

Evaluation committee Higher Education Institutions 4 consisted of the following members:

Professor Anja Krumeich (Chair)
Maastricht University

Professor John de Wit
Utrecht University

Professor Paul Hatton
University of Sheffield

Professor Marialuisa Lavitrano
Milano-Bicocca University

Professor Patrik Midlöv
Lund University

Professor Hans Savelberg
Maastricht University

Professor Louise Torp Dalgaard
Roskilde University

Rebecca Babb, Technopolis Group, was the committee secretary.

Oslo, December 2024

Profile of the administrative unit

The Faculty of Health and Sport Sciences at the University of Agder has a dual leadership structure, with the Faculty Director serving as the secretary for the Faculty Board and having administrative responsibility to follow-up on the board's decisions[1]. The faculty is divided into four departments, each headed by a Department Head who is responsible for education, research, and innovation activities. In terms of permanent positions, the Faculty of Health and Sport Sciences is comprised of 54 lecturers, 48 associate professors, 27 professors, 14 senior lecturers and five university college teachers. Women represent a majority in all categories. This includes 81% of lecturers, 60% of associate professors, 56% of professors, 71% of senior lecturers and 80% of university college teachers.

The faculty is comprised of a total of ten research groups of which the following four were included in the present evaluation: PRC-LN, HEIFA (Health and quality of life in a family perspective), CeH and PaHLS (Physical activity and health across the life span).

The faculty's strategy is based on the university's strategy to have research and artistic development work that is outstanding, critical, innovative and socially relevant, and to be a recognised partner with visibility and relevance regionally, nationally and internationally. The faculty aims to 1) work systematically to develop and strengthen the quality of research activities, 2) facilitate and strengthen practice-oriented and sustainable research-based innovation and service development in collaboration with regional, national, and international partners, 3) professionalise and improve the work with development, funding, implementation, and management of research project, 4) further develop and strengthen the quality of the faculty's doctoral program, and 5) identify strategic partners and strengthen international collaborations. Moreover, in the current strategic period, the faculty board has approved two key performance indicators (KPI) for research and innovation.

The University and the faculty work systematically to increase international collaboration through participation in EU projects and other internationally funded projects, researcher mobility programs and strategic partnerships. The faculty participates in the following international research and education funding programmes: Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, Nordplus, Nordforsk, NORHED, and UTFORSK. The faculty has also established partnerships with several key institutions, both regionally and nationally. According to the self-assessment, collaborations with partners from the third sector have also proven highly valuable, contributing to relevant research questions, and providing funding for research projects. In the field of sports science, numerous voluntary organisations have played an important role in the faculty's research and innovation activities. These partnerships have enhanced the ability to address relevant research questions and develop innovative

[1] As of January 1, 2024,the faculty adopted a unified management structure, with the Dean serving as the primary authority responsible for overseeing all activities.

solutions. Over the years, the faculty has fostered long-lasting relationships with individual researchers and research institutions both nationally and internationally. The added value of these collaborations is particularly important in improving the relevance, quality, and dissemination of their research. However, it is worth noting that there appears to be a lack of coherence between these collaborations and the top co-authoring institutions.

According to the self-assessment, in the future, the faculty can leverage its collaborative approach, qualified staff, ability to attract top students, and well-developed programs. However, research funding cuts pose a significant threat, impacting their research capabilities and attractiveness as an employer. The faculty continuously struggles with competitive funding, potentially limiting research advancement. Demographic changes may further reduce applicant pools, undermining their capacity to recruit highly qualified individuals. Additionally, the faculty's location also presents recruitment challenges, highlighting the importance of implementing effective recruitment strategies. Despite these challenges, the faculty's research groups are aligned with key policy documents, equipped with skilled researchers, and supported by robust university structures to address health service challenges from demographic shifts in Western societies. The faculty further benefits from regional financial support and collaborative opportunities, enabling strong partnerships and divers

Overall evaluation

The ToR of the Faculty of Health and Sport Sciences does not contain specific aspects to be evaluated. Therefore, this will not be addressed in this section.

The aims in research strategy of the University of Agder and of Faculty of Health and Sport Sciences are articulated in broad terms, such as doing things better, excelling, and being outstanding. This general approach provides limited guidelines for developing policy in research. However, the faculty has an interesting research portfolio that is well grounded in diverse domains of health sciences. This focus on health science is timely and highly relevant to a wide range of current health issues in society. Consequently, the faculty has a good portfolio of collaborations with societal partners.

While the University of Agder is relatively young, it is based on a longstanding tradition of higher education in the region (Agder *fylke*). This also holds true for the Faculty of Health and Sport Science, which has a considerable sectorial obligation in training professionals in nursing, social services and education – sectors with long history in the region. The institute therefore faces both a great opportunity and a challenge in combining traditional strengths with innovative approaches.

The distribution of academic positions is skewed to the side of professors and associate professors, while the number of PhD candidates is relatively low. The share of female staff is notably high, which is not uncommon given the health science focus of the faculty.

Departments with the faculty are responsible for education, research and innovation; however, the integration of these academic domains is limited. Participation in research projects is not structurally embedded in BSc and MSc programmes. Although academic staff engage with society to implement research findings in societal projects, there is a reluctance to involve commercial partners in these projects.

Recommendations

The evaluation committee wishes to extend the following recommendations to the administrative unit.

- There is room to strengthen the faculty's research power. While some centres and research groups are very productive and excelling, there is a struggle to survive in the research domain. To this end, the committee believes that it could be helpful to increase the number of PhD candidates, and increase international research collaborations, especially with different EU countries.
- The faculty has already established collaborations with diverse societal partners. However, the university commitment to being a university with and for society does not prominently show from the self-assessment. The committee suggests there is an opportunity to embrace societal collaboration, co-creation and co-learning with partners as a unique selling point for the faculty. This would match very well with the health sciences research focus.
- Integrating research into academic education programmes, such as BSc and MSc degrees, should be common practice. Training BSc and MSc students in research competencies will help build future capacity to strengthen the faculty's research power, which can be well matched with the societal outreach suggested in the second recommendation. A transdisciplinary education framework could be a useful model for such an approach.

1. Strategy, resources and organisation of research

1.1 Research strategy

The Faculty of Health and Sport Sciences is part of the relatively young University of Agder, established in 2007. Despite its recent creation in the academic landscape, the faculty has a long history within several fields. The faculty consists of four departments responsible for both education and research. The faculty oversees five bachelor's programmes, seven master's programmes, and one doctoral programme. It houses ten research groups and two prioritised research centres. Moreover, the faculty is the host institution for a regional centre dedicated to care research.

The ToR of the Faculty of Health and Sport Sciences does not contain specific aspect to be evaluated.

The Administrative unit has mentioned five strategic goals:

1) The faculty will work systematically to develop and strengthen the quality of research activities.

2) The faculty will facilitate and strengthen practice-oriented and sustainable research-based innovation and service development in collaboration with regional, national, and international partners.

3) The faculty will professionalize and improve the work with development, funding, implementation, and management of research projects.

4) The faculty will further develop and strengthen the quality of the faculty's doctoral program.

5) The faculty will identify strategic partners and strengthen international collaborations.

These strategic goals relate to the main objectives of the University of Agder, providing outstanding, critical, innovative and socially relevant research and artistic development work, as well as being a recognised partner with regional, national and international visibility.

Based on the faculty's strategic goals, five benchmarks have been defined. The departments have been asked to monitor their development in these five areas:

- Organizing of research – develop research groups which promote cultures of quality
- Competence building among the academic staff, e.g. number of PhDs
- Publications and research dissemination – increased quality and student involvement
- External funding – reflecting societal relevance
- International collaboration

Initiatives have been implemented to enhance research activity and foster international collaboration. Administrative support has been provided for various research related activities and quality assurance procedures have been implemented.

The committee's evaluation

The strategic goals are quite general, and it is disputable whether these goals can justify the adjective 'strategic'. Four of the five goals relate to improving the quality of academic work and research. In itself these are most commendable objectives, and goals that every academic institution should set itself. However, apart from the second aim which relates to the connection between academia and society, it is hard to call them 'strategic'. These goals do not seem to help the faculty to decide what initiatives to prioritise. Yet the evaluation of the research groups shows that some strategic choices have been made. However, it is not clear what kind of considerations underly these choices. At the university level, a strategic choice for six priority research centres has been made. Prioritising centres was based on past performance and future ambitions. Although the criteria are relevant, this is a reactive way of making strategic choices. Furthermore, although the goals set are supported by clear actions and initiatives as shown in the Strategic Action Plan for Research 2021-2024, and also by the five benchmarks that have been used to help departments to reflect on their development, it remains unclear how a plan-do-check-act (PDCA) circle with respect to these goals can be closed.

The committee's recommendations

- Define strategic goals in a way that these goals help the faculty to decide on priorities and planning future initiatives.
- Argue on which considerations strategic choices have been based.
- Develop and close a PDCA circle to evaluate progress of goals set.

1.2 Organisation of research

The faculty is divided into four departments that have tasks in education, research and innovation activities. In addition to this, the research has been organised along two lines. Firstly, research activities that are incorporated in Priority Research Centres. Secondly research activities that are housed in research groups. Priority research centres seem largely based on past performance. Research groups are organised across the borders of departments, but at the same time have a 'home'-department. However, it is not clear how the various tasks of departments (education, research, innovation, dissemination, outreach activities) are organised to mutually support each other.

The faculty has grown considerably over the past 10 years, and yet still has room for additional staff; however, it occurs to be hard to attract qualified staff. There is a gender imbalance, which relates to the disciplinary interest of the faculty and traditional roles in these fields (i.e. nursing, nutrition).

Career development of postdocs is organised in cooperation with the University of Oslo. For the full professors, a career development programme has been implemented at University of Agder. All staff members have time for education and research, the amount of research time varies with functions, between 10 and 45%. Sabbatical leaves are possible for staff members and PhD students are encouraged to stay abroad for a couple of months during their projects.

The committee's evaluation

It is good that the faculty has decided to focus on a limited number of research topics through Priority Research Centres. This focus could be even more effective if the selection criteria for these centres not only used past performance, but if also other more visionary and strategic considerations were taken into account as well. There seems to be room for a policy to enhance synergies between the various tasks that have to be fulfilled by the administrative unit and its staff. Finally, the ratio between assistant/associate/full professors and PhD's occurs to be quite low, less than one PhD per staff member.

The committee's recommendation

- Balance the ratio of staff and PhD-students, preferentially appoint PhD students.
- Consider whether a more proactive approach in the selection of priority research centres would be possible.
- The sabbatical leaves could play an important role in increasing international networks and collaborations. The faculty could encourage sabbaticals within EU countries as EU networks and collaboration would increase the possibility of strong applications for EU grants.

1.3 Research funding

The faculty gets basic research funding for each member of the scientific staff. Additional funding must be acquired by grant applications in national and international research calls and programmes. It is not clear how the resources in the faculty's self-assessment relate to the resource mentioned in the research group evaluation reports.

The committee's evaluation

The committee's evaluation is that researchers have been quite successful in receiving grants within Norway. There are relatively few grants from international funds.

The committee's recommendations

- We suggest that greater focus is placed on increasing international grants in general, and EU grants in particular. Here, the faculty has the opportunity to help the individual researchers with applications. It can help coordinate and perhaps create fewer but stronger applications. Furthermore, the faculty can have a role early in the application process, or long before it starts, to mediate collaborative contacts with other strong research environments, especially with different EU countries. See also above, the recommendation in section 1.2 with respect to sabbatical leaves to create and extend networks within Europe.

1.4 Use of infrastructures

The faculty does not yet participate in national, international infrastructures or infrastructures on the ESFRI roadmap. However, both internal and external infrastructures are available and used. The faculty oversees comprehensive laboratories hosting a wide range of physiological, muscle and movement testing equipment and devices for assessing habitual physical activity levels. Additionally, it operates two clinic laboratories, one at each campus offering training manikins and patient simulators for education of health professionals, which are also being used as infrastructure for research and continuing education. Furthermore, the faculty manages advanced research facilities situated in the

i4Health-Building at UiA, Campus Grimstad. These top modern facilities consist of housing simulators, a user test lab, an XR-lab, and a show room for welfare technology.

Internally, researchers use facilities like the UiA library and archive (AURA) and have access to advanced photo/video/podcast studios and to CoLAB – an interdisciplinary team that facilitates co-creation between private, public-sector organisations, as well as connecting academia and students. Externally, researchers make use of Service for Sensitive Data developed by the University of Oslo and various data cohorts with partners at various Norwegian universities and research institutes. The university has up to date guidelines for data management in place, these are followed by the faculty.

The committee's evaluation

It is unclear to what degree the research groups have knowledge of various national and international infrastructures. One might ask why the faculty is not participating in these research infrastructures. It is not clear what the considerations are, but it can be imagined that as a young university it takes time to become mature, and to develop resources and expertise to contribute to such infrastructure. A decision to not yet participate and focus on the internal growth and development might be wise.

The committee's recommendations

- Make an inventory of the research groups' needs for infrastructures.

1.5 Collaboration

The university wants to be a co-creation university, and as such be recognised as a partner in cooperations with society, business and industry for social development. The university and faculty participate in international research and education programmes (Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, Nordplus, Nordforsk, NORHED, and UTFORSK) and the university is a full member of the FORTHEM alliance of universities.

To further strengthen the national and international cooperation the faculty has in its Strategical Action Plan identified seven/eight action points. In the self-assessment, eight national collaborations (with hospitals, universities, municipalities) and nine international collaborations (with universities worldwide) have been reported.

The committee's evaluation

As often the case in academia, the topic of collaboration has been addressed and described as a number. We understand that this encouraged by the way academics evaluate each other, including accreditation procedures like the current one. However, what is missing is a narrative for the collaborations that have been established – specifically the reasons for collaborating with a specific partner and what benefits these collaborations bring for the role that the university has in society, i.e. progress of scientific research and understanding, better trained alumni and impact on society. A more content-wise and purpose-wise evaluation will help to improve the quality of collaborations.

Although it is commendable that the faculty has ambitions for improving the quality and quantity of national and international collaborations, it is unclear how the ambitions will be implemented and evaluated.

For a university that has the explicit ambition to be a co-creative university, the number of projects in which societal, business and industrial partners are involved is quite limited. Also, it is not clear how this ambition has been translated into a policy and how this occurs in education. The committee notes that there are relatively few collaborations with EU-countries.

The committee's recommendations

- Embrace your co-creation ambition and carry it forward.
- Start to think about collaboration as a means to reach goals together instead of a number that has to be filled out in accreditation procedures.
- Encourage increased cooperation with several EU countries.

1.6 Research staff

The topic of research staff has also been addressed under section 1.2. As mentioned there, the share of (associate) professors is rather high. In addition to that, a high share of the research staff has a PhD, the average age of PhD students is relatively high. In the self-assessment, the share of women has been mentioned, for most positions this is relatively high (up to 80% for some positions) and occurs to be related to the disciplinary focus of the faculty and its history.

The committee's evaluation

For research, PhDs often function as the work force. PhDs have a lot of time dedicated to designing, setting up, running studies, analysing the results and drafting first versions of papers. To enhance research and to be a productive team, a good balance between the share of PhDs and supervisors (i.e. (associate) professors) is required. At the faculty this distribution is skewed to the supervisors. The high share of employees that identify as woman does not have to be a problem.

The committee's recommendations

- Increase the number of dedicated PhDs. An option to increase this number could be by increasing the number of "collaborative PhD-students" that do part of their work at or together with another research group at another university.

1.7 Open Science

In accordance with national guidelines, the university has developed an infrastructure for open access publications and data sharing. The faculty has a high rate of open access publications (>90%).

The university has principles and guidelines for data management and good research practices and follows these. Other aspects of open science, i.e. recognition and rewards, public engagement, open software, citizen science, open education sources, have not been discussed in the self-assessment.

The committee's evaluation

The university occurs to have successfully promoted open access publication and data sharing. Again, given the ambition to be a co-creation university, it is surprising that the aspects of open science that would relate to this ambition have not been addressed.

The committee's recommendations

- Make up your mind on all aspects of open science, develop a policy to achieve what you want to strive for in this area, especially where it comes to co-creation.

2. Research production, quality and integrity

Introduction

The faculty's research is concentrated on 1) Public, environmental and occupational health; 2) Nursing; 3) Sport Sciences; 4) Social work; 5) Psychology and 6) Education and educational research. These research domains fit well with the educational portfolio of the faculty. From the faculty's perspective the research is focussed on physical activity behaviour, nutrition, e-health and nursing. Research groups and expertise centres covering these domains are in place. NIFU classification for these domains seems to fit this. Over the past 10 years the scientific output, as measured by the number of publications has grown. The university has a suitable structure to warrant scientific integrity.

2.1 Research quality and integrity

This part includes one overall evaluation of each research group that the administrative unit has registered for the evaluation. The overall assessment of the research group has been written by one of the 18 expert panels that have evaluated the registered research groups in EVALMEDHELSE. The expert panels are solely behind the evaluation of the research group(s). The evaluation committee is not responsible for the assessment of the research group(s).

Research group: Centre for e-Health

The Centre for E-health (CEH) is a multi-faculty organisation with a clear structure that is well staffed with senior researchers and PhD students. The involved faculties provide good conditions for interdisciplinary work, keeping the focus on E-Health. CEH is well-financed through core and external funding and has a modern research facility with excellent infrastructure resources. It is an ambitious research group with the aim to become a nationally leading and internationally recognised research centre. The CEH is meeting its ambitions within all the benchmark areas, although specific levels/quantifications that CEH seeks to target are lacking. There is a clear alignment between the Centre's research objectives and reported projects and publications. This clear focus for the research efforts is a strength and contributes to advancing the research field nationally and internationally. Reported articles are published in high quality journals and depict the use of various study designs. CEH is in several ways active in achieving societal impact and many of its activities support knowledge transfer. For example, it has been contributing to national guidelines and partaking in debates on health care. There is also evidence of close collaboration with municipal and regional stakeholders in several of CEH's projects and the use of co-design and co-creation is underlined in the Centre's strategy. This focus is timely and highly relevant to national and international health and wellbeing.

Research group: Health and Quality of Life in a Family Perspective

The research group HEIFA is well organised with a clear strategy and aims. It is a moderately sized group, but has a clear focus around children, young people and their well-being. The group contributes to research and teaching at different levels, and the group is supported to a standard degree by its host institute. The group provides a very good environment for PhD students. Although the group has been successful in obtaining some

external research funding, this was moderate in extent during the assessment period. Its national and international collaborations were however very good, and the quality of the work was judged internationally excellent by the panel. The research group's societal impact was considered to be primarily national. There was little evidence of user involvement in the research itself and how such involvement may have shaped the group's projects and knowledge transfer strategy.

Research group: Physical Activity and Health across Lifespan

The overall assessment of the research group by the panel is that it is internationally modest. The group Physical Activity and Health Across the Lifespan (PAHLS) is derived from the group Physiological Adaptation to Sports, Exercise and Activity (PASTA) in a recent re-organisation. The overall ambitious aim is to do research on physical activity and health across the lifespan and enhance understanding why some people are active and translate findings to increase physical activity and health. The 12 members are not fully employed within the group and funding is sparse but increasing. Their area of research is of great interest and importance for general health and opportunities are plentiful. As a newly started research organisation they face many challenges with establishing the basic fundaments in the organisation, funding, collaborations nationally and internationally. Most of the present research is not initiated by the group and with the primary investigator in other research groups.

Research group: Priority Research Centre for Lifecourse Nutrition

The panel considered the research group's organisation and composition excellent. The PRCLN is a growing research group with a clear aim and ambition. It has a cohesive strategy with realistic benchmarks to achieve this and is well supported by the host institute. The panel considered the research group to be successful in attracting external research funding. The research group contributes to a significant number of large studies of high quality and with likely significant impact nationally. It was less clear what the societal impact of the group was internationally. The research group would benefit from more consideration of user involvement in research.

The committee´s comment to the assessment of the research group(s).

The evaluation of the four research groups, two of them are prioritised research centres, is diverse, but over all good. The research group PHALS faces the most challenging situation. As a young group, it would benefit from support to enable growth, organise its expertise and become a partner in national and international networks. As noticed by the evaluation panel their research area is of great importance to general health. For the HEIFA and PRCLN the biggest challenge occurs to be user involvement, this would match with the university's policy to be a university with and for society.

3. Diversity and equality

The University of Agder wishes to foster a culture which is based on responsibility and openness (UiA's Strategic Plan and ethical guidelines). Speaking out about things which do not work, undesirable incidents, accidents/near-accidents, and reporting wrongdoing are all part of the measures required for developing a positive and acceptable work and study environment. Employees and students are encouraged to speak up or report any knowledge of or awareness of wrongdoing at UiA. This is to afford those responsible the opportunity to implement necessary measures and prevent the recurrence of similar situations in the future. In accordance with this the university has a committee on Equality and Inclusion, and a research Centre for Gender and Equality.

The committee's evaluation

It is commendable that the university has explicit attention for diversity and equality. The Committee on Equality and Inclusions has a role in initiating and advising with respect to policy in this domain. It is not clear which institutions are in place (e.g. ombudsman) to actually guard, thrive and stimulate the culture of responsibility and openness. Neither has it been mentioned to which level these ambitions have been achieved.

The committee's recommendations

- Make your ambitions for Diversity and Equality effective and measurable.

4. Relevance to institutional and sectorial purposes

The faculty has a task in training specific professionals, e.g. in nursing, social education and clinical nursing. For this task, the faculty receives governmental funding. Moreover, the faculty holds scientific and pedagogical responsibility for a number of programmes.

The faculty has a track record of research that focuses on societal impact, which intends to improve quality of life of individuals and the ability of public services to provide good offerings. Next to this, basic research is a focus as well.

The university has a policy with respect to commercialisation (Principles for Commercialisation). Among staff there is some reluctance to collaborate with commercial partners.

The university has an administration innovation service, which supports researchers in the transfer of knowledge. Several bilateral agreements exist with partners (NORCE and Soderlandet hospital) to strength cooperation on innovation. There is a great commitment among staff to conduct research that improves the quality of life of people within society; this has resulted in many collaborations with public services.

The committee's evaluation

The faculty's staff exhibit a high motivation for societally relevant research and innovations. The research domains of the faculty are optimally suited for societal impact. This seems to a strong asset for the faculty. It also relates to one of our previous remarks about the narrow approach of the concept of open science. Although the reluctance against this can be understood, it might be wise to explore how the faculty's personal values can be maintained and yet collaborate with commercial partners.

The committee's recommendations

- Working with and for society and societal partners seems to be the natural attitude for the university and the faculty, this could be an interesting ingredient for a research strategy.
- Open up for commercial collaborations without sacrificing institutional and personal values.

4.1 Higher education institutions

The university aims to provide research-based education. In the faculty this has been implemented at three levels:

- research of education, how to optimise learning and teaching
- training students in critical thinking and the scientific method
- teaching the 'own' most recent research findings

Most researchers teach at all levels from bachelor to PhD programmes. The PhD-courses relate to the faculty's research. The ten research groups and two priority centres work on topics that are relevant for the faculty's bachelor, master and PhD programmes. The research groups are encouraged to contribute to and to develop PhD courses. Participation of students in research does not seem to be common and widely accepted and is not (yet)

an integrated part of bachelor's and master's programmes. On a voluntary base it is possible.

The committee's evaluation

The three levels of research-based education are really different and incomparable categories. The first level relates to the professionalism of the teaching staff, where it should be common practice that education is evidence informed. The second level should be the core of academic education, where critical thinking and working in accordance with the principles of scientific method distinguishes academic education from professional training. At level three, the focus should not be solely on the knowledge available at an institute; instead, should direct what is learned and taught and the learning outcomes related to performance objectives of a study programme should be leading. The impression occurs that there is room to reflect on the various levels of research-based education. Furthermore, having (bachelor and) master students involved in research projects should be part of any academic programme.

The committee's recommendations

- Rethink the relation of research and education in the department and study programmes
- Consider involvement in a research project as a requirement for bachelor and master programmes.

5. Relevance to society

Introduction

The faculty follows a human-centric, interdisciplinary approach, placing human beings and their activities at the heart of its education and research. With a commitment to versatility and openness, it fosters collaborations across disciplines and borders, aligning with the university's vision of "Co-creation for the knowledge of the future." Over the last decade, the faculty has seen significant growth in research, programs, and staff.

Its work is grounded in the natural, human, and social sciences, with a strong focus on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 4 (Quality Education), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). Health is a central theme, with research addressing welfare challenges like diet, care, and living conditions, and developing sustainable healthcare services.

The faculty also emphasises lifelong learning, offering programs in high-demand fields such as nursing, public health, disability studies, and mental health. It prioritises user involvement and digital health solutions while producing competent educators in physical education and food and health subjects, contributing to better public health and quality of life.

The committee`s comments on impact case 1 - **The establishment of telemedicine treatment in the Agder region**

This project has driven significant advancements in healthcare delivery through the creation of innovative e-health services and collaborative frameworks in Agder region. A new joint service domain for remote patient monitoring and care management was established, improving healthcare accessibility and efficiency. Additionally, a Regional Coordination Group (RCG) for e-health and welfare technology was formed, adopting the Quadruple Helix model to foster collaboration among diverse stakeholders. Through the project, transferable best practices for e-health were developed, enabling implementation at both national and international levels. It also facilitated the creation of international research networks, laying the foundation for the Centre for e-Health’s involvement in new projects, applications, and academic publications. The initiative generated valuable insights into the establishment of services across different administrative levels, shedding light on how healthcare systems are delivered, legislated, and financed. Furthermore, barriers to scaling e-health solutions were identified and addressed at a national level. By enhancing remote patient care and fostering sustainable innovations, this project has transformed the landscape of healthcare delivery and strengthened global partnerships in e-health.

The committee`s comments on impact case 2 – Scaling up evidence-based early-life nutrition interventions for community resilience and life course health (Nutrition Now)

The Nutrition Now Project is a pioneering initiative focused on implementing digital, evidence-based interventions during early life at community and county levels. It aims to enhance community resilience and promote life course health, grounded in insights from

four original studies. The project has led to improve nutritional practices, as it improved pregnancy and child diets, meal practices in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC), and overall dietary care. It has strengthened public health efforts to elevate food and meal standards in ECEC settings, to bolster nutritional guidance in primary healthcare, and to empower municipal efforts to address nutrition-related challenges. Moreover, it contributed to policy transformation, as the Agder County Council shifted its approach to early life nutrition, adopting a focused thematic strategy and equipping its workforce accordingly. Results of the project where integrated in education, as ECEC teachers and primary healthcare nurses at the University of Agder now receive tailored training on early life nutrition. The Nutrition Now project is based on earlier trials that studied and assessed the efficacy of underlying dietary interventions.

The committee`s comments on impact case 3 – The Norwegian Fit for Delivery trial

The Norwegian Fit for Delivery trial (NFFD) has demonstrated that diet and physical activity interventions during pregnancy are both feasible and effective. The intervention led to improved maternal diets, increased physical activity, and optimised gestational weight gain. Its findings have contributed to influential meta-analyses and informed lifestyle guidance for pregnant women. NFFP data were combined with three other studies; this facilitated the development of innovative methods for screening and diagnosing gestational diabetes. Key elements of the intervention are now being implemented in primary healthcare for pregnant women in two Norwegian counties, and insights from NFFD are being incorporated into education programs at the University of Agder.

The committee`s comments on impact case 4 - Starting Right ™

This project drives innovation in public health by leveraging digital solutions to enhance child and school health services. This innovation is based on a digital solution to collect data on children and adolescent' health and quality of life, using validated surveys. Thus, it provides evidence-based insights into children's health and development, enabling earlier identification of needs and improved intervention strategies. Moreover, the project increased health literacy of parents and children. The project also provided insight in how digital tools influence work processes and assessments in child and school health servcies; this led to more effective, evidence-based practices. Insights gained have informed implementation strategies, supported research collaborations, and contributed to educational programs at the University of Agder.

Appendices

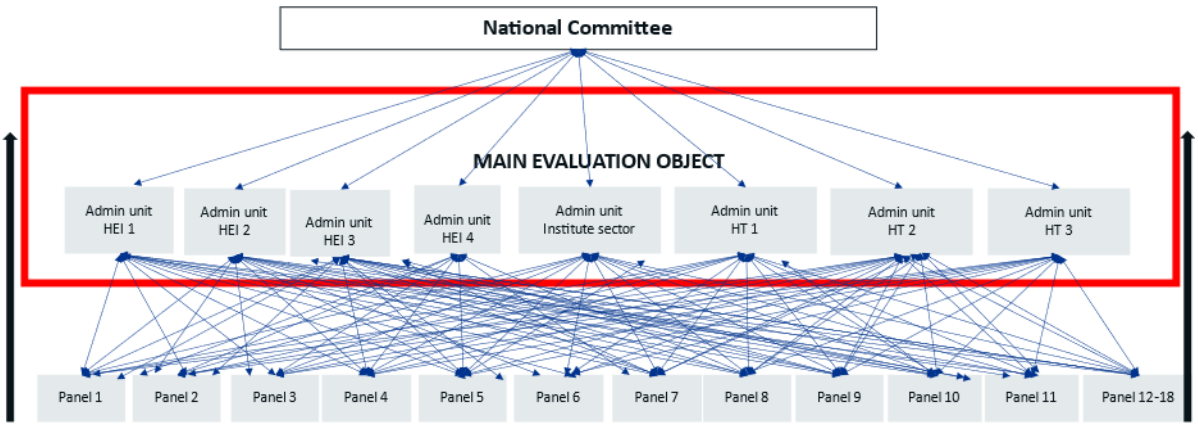
Evaluation of Medicine and health 2023-2024

By evaluating Norwegian research and higher education we aim to enhance the quality, relevance, and efficiency. In accordance with the statutes of the Research Council of Norway (RCN), the RCN evaluates Norwegian professional environments to create a solid and up-to-date knowledge base about Norwegian research and higher education in an international perspective.

The evaluation of life sciences is conducted in 2022-2024. The evaluation of medicine takes place in 2023-2024. The evaluation of biosciences was carried out in 2022-2023. The primary aim of the evaluation of life sciences is to reveal and confirm the quality and the relevance of research performed at Norwegian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), the institute sector and the health trusts. The evaluation shall result in recommendations to the institutions, the RCN and the ministries.

Evaluation of medicine and health (EVALMEDHELSE) 2023-2024
The evaluation of medicine and health includes sixty-eight administrative units (e.g., faculty, department, institution, center, division) which are assessed by evaluation committees according to sectorial affiliation and other relevant similarities between the units. The administrative units enrolled their research groups (315) to eighteen expert panels organised by research subjects or themes and assessed across institutions and sectors.

Organisation of evaluation of medicine and health 2023-2024



The institutions have been allowed to adapt the evaluation mandate (Terms of Reference) to their own strategic goals. This is to ensure that the results of the evaluation will be useful for the institution's own strategic development. The administrative unit together with the research group(s) selects an appropriate benchmark for each of the research group(s).

The Research Council of Norway has commissioned an external evaluation secretariat at Technopolis Group for the implementation of the evaluation process.

Each institution/administrative unit is responsible for following up the recommendations that apply to their own institution/administrative unit. The Research Council will use the results from the evaluation in the development of funding instruments and as a basis for advice to the Government.

The web page for the evaluation of medicine and health 2023-2024: [Evaluation of medicine and health sciences (forskningsradet.no)]

Forskningsrådet

Se vedlagte adresseliste

Vår saksbehandler / tlf.	Vår ref.	Deres ref.	Sted
Hilde G. Nielsen/40922260	23/3056	[Ref.]	Lysaker 28.4.2023

Invitasjon til å delta i fagevaluering av medisin og helsefag (EVALMEDHELSE) 2023-2024

Vi viser til varsel om oppstart av nye evalueringer sendt institusjonenes ledelse 9. november 2021 (vedlegg 2).

Porteføljestyret for livsvitenskap har vedtatt å gjennomføre fagevaluering av livsvitenskap 2022-2024 som to evalueringer:

- Evaluering av biovitenskap (EVALBIOVIT) (2022-2023)
- Evaluering av medisin og helsefag (EVALMEDHELSE) (2023-2024)

Hovedmålet med fagevalueringen av livsvitenskap 2022-2024 er å vurdere kvalitet og rammebetingelser for livsvitenskapelig forskning i Norge, samt forskningens relevans for sentrale samfunnsområder. Evalueringen skal resultere i anbefalinger til institusjonene, til Forskningsrådet og til departementene. Den forrige fagevalueringen av biologi, medisin og helsefag ble gjennomført i 2010/2011 (vedlegg 3).

Fagevaluering av livsvitenskap retter seg mot UH-sektor, helseforetak og instituttsektor (vedlegg 4). Forskningsrådet forventer at aktuelle forskningsmiljøer deltar i evalueringene, selv om beslutning om deltagelse gjøres ved den enkelte institusjon. Videre ber vi om at deltakende institusjoner setter av tilstrekkelig med ressurser til å delta i evalueringsprosessen, og at institusjonen oppnevner minst én representant som kontaktperson for Forskningsrådet.

Invitasjon til å delta i fagevaluering av medisin og helsefag (2023-2024)

Fagevaluering av medisin og helsefag er organisert over to nivåer (vedlegg 4, side 11). Internasjonale ekspertpaneler vil evaluere forskergrupper på tvers av fag, disiplin og forskningssektorer (UH, institutt og helseforetak) etter kriteriene beskrevet i kapittel 2 i evalueringsprotokollen (vedlegg 4).

Panelrapporten(e) for forskergruppene vil inngå i bakgrunnsdokumentasjonen til forskergruppen(e)s administrative enhet (hovedevalueringsobjektet i evaluering), og som vil bli evaluert i internasjonale

sektorspesifikke evalueringskomiteer. Evalueringskriteriene for administrative enheter er beskrevet i kapittel 2 i evalueringsprotokollen (vedlegg 4).

Innmelding av administrative enheter og forskergrupper – frist 6. juni 2023

Administrative enheter (hovedevalueringsobjektet i evalueringen) – skjema 1

Forskningsrådet inviterer institusjonene til å melde inn sine administrative enhet/er ved å fylle ut skjema 1. Definisjonen av en administrativ enhet i denne evalueringen er å finne på side 3 (kap 1.1) i evalueringsprotokollen (vedlegg 4). Ved innmelding av administrativ/e enhet/er anbefaler Forskningsrådet institusjonene til å se innmelding av administrativ enhet/er i sammenheng med tilpasning av mandat for den administrative enheten (Appendix A i evalueringsprotokollen).

Forskergrupper – skjema 2

Forskningsrådet ber de administrative enheter om å melde inn forskergrupper i tråd med forskergruppedefinisjonen (kap 1.1) og minimumskravene beskrevet i kapittel 1.2 i evalueringsprotokollen. Hver administrative enhet melder inn sin/e forskergruppe/r ved å fylle ut Skjema 2. Vi ber også om at forskergruppene innplasseres i den tentative fagpanelinndelingen for EVALMEDHELSE (vedlegg 5).

Forskningsrådet vil ferdigstille panelstruktur og avgjøre den endelige fordelingen av forskergruppene på fagpaneler *etter* at alle forskergrupper er meldt inn. Mer informasjon vil bli sendt i slutten av juni 2023.

Invitasjon til å foreslå eksperter – skjema 3

Forskningsrådet inviterer administrative enheter og forskergrupper til å spille inn forslag til eksperter som kan inngå i evalueringskomitéene og i ekspertpanelene. Hver evalueringskomité vil bestå av 7-9 komitémedlemmer, mens hvert ekspertpanel vil bestå av 5-7 eksperter.

Obs. Det er to faner i regnearket:

- FANE 1 – forslag til medlemmer til evalueringskomitéene. Medlemmene i evalueringskomitéene skal inneha bred vitenskapelig kompetanse, både faglig kompetanse og andre kvalifikasjoner som erfaring med ledelse, strategi- og evalueringsarbeid og kunnskapsutveksling.
- FANE 2 – forslag til medlemmer til ekspertpanelene. Medlemmene i ekspertpanelene skal være internasjonalt ledende eksperter innen medisin og helsefaglig forskning og innovasjon.

Utfylte skjemaer (3 stk):

- innmelding av administrative enhet/er (skjema 1)
- innmelding av forskergruppe/er (skjema 2)
- forslag til eksperter (skjema 3)

sendes på epost til evalmedhelse@forskningsradet.no **innen 6. juni 2023.**

Tilpasning av mandat – frist 30. september 2023

Forskningsrådet ber med dette administrative enheter om å tilpasse mandatet (vedlegg 4) ved å opplyse om egne strategiske mål og andre lokale forhold som er relevant for evalueringen.

Forskningsrådet

Tilpasningen gjøres ved å fylle inn de åpne punktene i malen (Appendix A). Utfylt skjema sendes på epost til evalmedhelse@forskningsradet.no innen 30. september 2023.

Digitalt informasjonsmøte 15. mai 2023, kl. 14.00-15.00.
Forskningsrådet arrangerer et digitalt informasjonsmøte for alle som ønsker å delta i EVALMEDHELSE.

Påmelding til informasjonsmøtet gjøres her: Fagevaluering av medisin og helsefag (EVALMEDHELSE) - Digitalt informasjonsmøte (pameldingssystem.no) .

Nettsider
Forskningsrådet vil opprette en nettside på www.forskningsradet.no for EVALMEDHELSE hvor informasjon vil bli publisert fortløpende. Her kan dere lese om Fagevaluering av biovitenskap (EVALBIOVIT) 2022-2023. Fagevaluering av medisin og helsefag vil bli gjennomført etter samme modell.

Spørsmål vedrørende fagevaluering av medisin og helsefag kan rettes til Hilde G. Nielsen, hgn@forskningsradet.no eller mobil 40 92 22 60.

Med vennlig hilsen
Norges forskningsråd

Ole Johan Borge	Hilde G. Nielsen
avdelingsdirektør	spesialrådgiver
Helse	Helse

Dokumentet er elektronisk godkjent og signert og har derfor ikke håndskrevne signaturer.

Kopi
Helse- og omsorgsdepartementet
Kunnskapsdepartementet

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1. Adresseliste
2. Nye fagevalueringer – varsel om oppstart november 2021
3. Erfaringer med oppfølging av fagevaluering av biologi, medisin og helsefag 2010/2011
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9. Appendix A – word format

The Research Council of Norway

Evaluation of life sciences in Norway 2022-2023

LIVSEVAL protocol version 1.0

By decision of the Portfolio board for life sciences April 5., 2022

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Oslo, 5 April 2022

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1 Introduction

Research assessments based on this protocol serve different aims and have different target groups. The primary aim of the evaluation of life sciences is to reveal and confirm the quality and the relevance of research performed at Norwegian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), and by the institute sector and regional health authorities and health trusts. These institutions will hereafter be collectively referred to as Research Performing Organisations (RPOs). The assessments should serve a formative purpose by contributing to the development of research quality and relevance at these institutions and at the national level.

1.1 Evaluation units

The assessment will comprise a number of *administrative units* submitted for evaluation by the host institution. By assessing these administrative units in light of the goals and strategies set for them by their host institution, it will be possible to learn more about how public funding is used at the institution(s) to facilitate high-quality research and how this research contributes to society. The administrative units will be assessed by evaluation committees according to sectoral affiliation and/or other relevant similarities between the units.

The administrative units will be invited to submit data on their *research groups* to be assessed by expert panels organised by research subject or theme. See Chapter 3 for details on organisation.

Administrative unit	An administrative unit is any part of an RPO that is recognised as a formal (administrative) unit of that RPO, with a designated budget, strategic goals and dedicated management. It may, for instance, be a university faculty or department, a department of an independent research institute or a hospital.
Research group	Designates groups of researchers within the administrative units that fulfil the minimum requirements set out in section 1.2. Research groups are identified and submitted for evaluation by the administrative unit, which may decide to consider itself a single research group.

1.2 Minimum requirements for research groups

1) The research group must be sufficiently large in size, i.e. at least five persons in full-time positions with research obligations. This merely indicates the minimum number, and larger units are preferable. In exceptional cases, the minimum number may include PhD students, postdoctoral fellows and/or non-tenured researchers. *In all cases, a research group must include at least three full-time tenured staff*. Adjunct professors, technical staff and other relevant personnel may be listed as group members but may not be included in the minimum number.

2) The research group subject to assessment must have been established for at least three years. Groups of more recent date may be accepted if they have come into existence as a consequence of major organisational changes within their host institution.
3) The research group should be known as such both within and outside the institution (e.g. have a separate website). It should be able to document common activities and results in the form of co-publications, research databases and infrastructure, software, or shared responsibilities for delivering education, health services or research-based solutions to designated markets.
4) In its self-assessment, the administrative unit should propose a suitable benchmark for the research group. The benchmark will be considered by the expert panels as a reference in their assessment of the performance of the group. The benchmark can be grounded in both academic and extra-academic standards and targets, depending on the purpose of the group and its host institution.

1.3 The evaluation in a nutshell

The assessment concerns:

- research that the administrative unit and its research groups have conducted in the previous 10 years
- the research strategy that the administrative units under evaluation intend to pursue going forward
- the capacity and quality of research in life sciences at the national level

The Research Council of Norway (RCN) will:

- provide a template for the Terms of Reference[1] for the assessment of RPOs and a national-level assessment in life sciences
- appoint members to evaluation committees and expert panels
- provide secretarial services
- commission reports on research personnel and publications based on data in national registries
- take responsibility for following up assessments and recommendations at the national level.

RPOs conducting research in life sciences are expected to take part in the evaluation. The board of each RPO under evaluation is responsible for tailoring the assessment to its own strategies and specific needs and for following them up within their own institution. Each participating RPO will carry out the following steps:

1) Identify the administrative unit(s) to be included as the main unit(s) of assessment
2) Specify the Terms of Reference by including information on specific tasks and/or strategic goals of relevance to the administrative unit(s)

[1] The terms of reference (ToR) document defines all aspects of how the evaluation committees and expert panels will conduct the [research area] evaluation. It defines the objectives and the scope of the evaluation, outlines the responsibilities of the involved parties, and provides a description of the resources available to carry out the evaluation.

3) The administrative unit will, in turn, be invited to register a set of research groups that fulfil the minimum criteria specified above (see section 1.2). The administrative unit may decide to consider itself a single research group.
4) For each research group, the administrative unit should select an appropriate benchmark in consultation with the group in question. This benchmark can be a reference to an academic level of performance or to the group's contributions to other institutional or sectoral purposes (see section 2.4). The benchmark will be used as a reference in the assessment of the unit by the expert panel.
5) The administrative units subject to assessment must provide information about each of their research groups, and about the administrative unit as a whole, by preparing self-assessments and by providing additional documentation in support of the self-assessment.

1.4 Target groups

- Administrative units represented by institutional management and boards
- Research groups represented by researchers and research group leaders
- Research funders
- Government

The evaluation will result in recommendations to the institutions, the RCN and the ministries. The results of the evaluation will also be disseminated for the benefit of potential students, users of research and society at large.

This protocol is intended for all participants in the evaluation. It provides the information required to organise and carry out the research assessments. Questions about the interpretation or implementation of the protocol should be addressed to the RCN.

2 Assessment criteria

The administrative units are to be assessed on the basis of five assessment criteria. The five criteria are applied in accordance with international standards. Finally, the evaluation committee passes judgement on the administrative units as a whole in qualitative terms. In this overall assessment, the committee should relate the assessment of the specific tasks to the strategic goals that the administrative unit has set for itself in the Terms of Reference.

When assessing administrative units, the committees will build on a separate assessment by expert panels of the research groups within the administrative units. See Chapter 3 'Evaluation process and organisation' for a description of the division of tasks.

2.1 Strategy, resources and organisation

The evaluation committee assesses the framework conditions for research in terms of funding, personnel, recruitment and research infrastructure in relation to the strategic aims set for the administrative unit. The administrative unit should address at least the following five specific aspects in its self-assessment: 1) funding sources, 2) national and international cooperation, 3) cross-sector and interdisciplinary cooperation, 4) research careers and mobility, and 5) Open Science. These five aspects relate to how the unit organises and actually performs its research, its composition in terms of leadership and personnel, and how the unit is run on a day-to-day basis.

To contribute to understanding what the administrative unit can or should change to improve its ability to perform, the evaluation committee is invited to focus on factors that may affect performance.

Further, the evaluation committee assesses the extent to which the administrative unit's goals for the future remain scientifically and societally relevant. It is also assessed whether its aims and strategy, as well as the foresight of its leadership and its overall management, are optimal in relation to attaining these goals. Finally, it is assessed whether the plans and resources are adequate to implement this strategy.

2.2 Research production, quality and integrity

The evaluation committee assesses the profile and quality of the administrative unit's research and the contribution the research makes to the body of scholarly knowledge and the knowledge base for other relevant sectors of society. The committee also assesses the scale of the unit's research results (scholarly publications, research infrastructure developed by the unit, and other contributions to the field) and its contribution to Open Science (early knowledge and sharing of data and other relevant digital objects, as well as science communication and collaboration with societal partners, where appropriate).

The evaluation committee considers the administrative unit's policy for research integrity and how violations of such integrity are prevented. It is interested in how the unit deals with research data, data management, confidentiality (GDPR) and integrity, and the extent to which independent and critical pursuit of research is made possible within the unit. Research integrity relates to both the scientific integrity of conducted research and the professional integrity of researchers.

2.3 Diversity and equality

The evaluation committee considers the diversity of the administrative unit, including gender equality. The presence of differences can be a powerful incentive for creativity and talent development in a diverse administrative unit. Diversity is not an end in itself in that regard, but a tool for bringing together different perspectives and opinions.

The evaluation committee considers the strategy and practices of the administrative unit to prevent discrimination on the grounds of gender, age, disability, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics.

2.4 Relevance to institutional and sectoral purposes

The evaluation committee compares the relevance of the administrative unit's activities and results to the specific aspects detailed in the Terms of Reference for each institution and to the relevant sectoral goals (see below).

Higher Education Institutions

There are 36 Higher Education Institutions in Norway that receive public funding from the Ministry for Education and Research. Twenty-one of the 36 institutions are owned by the ministry, whereas the last 15 are privately owned. The HEIs are regulated under the Act relating to universities and university colleges of 1 August 2005.

The purposes of Norwegian HEIs are defined as follows in the Act relating to universities and university colleges[2]

- provide higher education at a high international level;
- conduct research and academic and artistic development work at a high international level;
- disseminate knowledge of the institution's activities and promote an understanding of the principle of academic freedom and application of scientific and artistic methods and results in the teaching of students, in the institution's own general activity as well as in public administration, in cultural life and in business and industry.

In line with these purposes, the Ministry for Research and Education has defined four overall goals for HEIs that receive public funding. These goals have been applied since 2015:

1) High quality in research and education
2) Research and education for welfare, value creation and innovation
3) Access to education (esp. capacity in health and teacher education)
4) Efficiency, diversity and solidity of the higher education sector and research system

The committee is invited to assess to what extent the research activities and results of each administrative unit have contributed to sectoral purposes as defined above. In particular, the committee is invited to take the share of resources spent on education at the administrative units into account and to assess the relevance and contributions of research to education, focusing on the master's and PhD levels. This assessment should be distinguished from an

[2] https://lovdata.no/dokument/NLE/lov/2005-04-01-15?q=universities

assessment of the quality of education in itself, and it is limited to the role of research in fostering high-quality education.

Research institutes (the institute sector)

Norway's large institute sector reflects a practical orientation of state R&D funding that has long historical roots. The Government's strategy for the institute sector[3] applies to the 33 independent research institutes that receive public basic funding through the RCN, in addition to 12 institutes outside the public basic funding system.

The institute sector plays an important and specific role in attaining the overall goal of the national research system, i.e. to increase competitiveness and innovation power to address major societal challenges. The research institutes' contributions to achieving these objectives should therefore form the basis for the evaluation. The main purpose of the sector is to conduct independent applied research for present and future use in the private and public sector. However, some institutes primarily focus on developing a research platform for public policy decisions, others on fulfilling their public responsibilities.

The institutes should:

- maintain a sound academic level, documented through scientific publications in recognised journals
- obtain competitive national and/or international research funding grants
- conduct contract research for private and/or public clients
- demonstrate robustness by having a reasonable number of researchers allocated to each research field

The committee is invited to assess the extent to which the research activities and results of each administrative unit contribute to sectoral purposes and overall goals as defined above. In particular, the committee is invited to assess the level of collaboration between the administrative unit(s) and partners in their own or other sectors.

The hospital sector

There are four regional health authorities (RHFs) in Norway. They are responsible for the specialist health service in their respective regions. The RHFs are regulated through the Health Enterprises Act of 15 June 2001 and are bound by requirements that apply to specialist and other health services, the Health Personnel Act and the Patient Rights Act. Under each of the regional health authorities, there are several health trusts (HFs), which can consist of one or more hospitals. A health trust (HF) is wholly owned by an RHF.

Research is one of the four main tasks of hospital trusts.[4] The three other mains tasks are to ensure good treatment, education and training of patients and relatives. Research is important if the health service is to keep abreast of stay up-to-date with medical developments and carry out critical assessments of established and new diagnostic methods,

[3] Strategy for a holistic institute policy (Kunnskapsdepartementet 2020)

[4] Cf. the Specialist Health Services Act § 3-8 and the Health Enterprises Act §§ 1 and 2

treatment options and technology, and work on quality development and patient safety while caring for and guiding patients.

The committee is invited to assess the extent to which the research activities and results of each administrative unit have contributed to sectoral purposes as described above. The assessment does not include an evaluation of the health services performed by the services.

2.5 Relevance to society

The committee assesses the quality, scale and relevance of contributions targeting specific economic, social or cultural target groups, of advisory reports on policy, of contributions to public debates, and so on. The documentation provided as the basis for the assessment of societal relevance should make it possible to assess relevance to various sectors of society (i.e. business, the public sector, non-governmental organisations and civil society).

When relevant, the administrative units will be asked to link their contributions to national and international goals set for research, including the Norwegian Long-term Plan for Research and Higher Education and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Sector-specific objectives, e.g. those described in the Development Agreements for the HEIs and other national guidelines for the different sectors, will be assessed as part of criterion 2.4.

The committee is also invited to assess the societal impact of research based on case studies submitted by the administrative units and/or other relevant data presented to the committee. Academic impact will be assessed as part of criterion 2.2.

3 Evaluation process and organisation

The RCN will organise the assessment process as follows:

- Commission a professional secretariat to support the assessment process in the committees and panels, as well as the production of self-assessments within each RPO
- Commission reports on research personnel and publications within life sciences based on data in national registries
- Appoint one or more evaluation committees for the assessment of administrative units.
- Divide the administrative units between the appointed evaluation committees according to sectoral affiliation and/or other relevant similarities between the units.
- Appoint a number of expert panels for the assessment of research groups submitted by the administrative units.
- Divide research groups between expert panels according to similarity of research subjects or themes.
- Task the chairs of the evaluation committees with producing a national-level report building on the assessments of administrative units and a national-level assessments produced by the expert panels.

Committee members and members of the expert panels will be international, have sufficient competence and be able, as a body, to pass judgement based on all relevant assessment criteria. The RCN will facilitate the connection between the assessment levels of panels and committees by appointing committee members as panel chairs.

3.1 Division of tasks between the committee and panel levels

The expert panels will assess research groups across institutions and sectors, focusing on the first two criteria specified in Chapter 2: 'Strategy, resources and organisation' and 'Research production and quality' The assessments from the expert panels will also be used as part of the evidence base for a report on Norwegian research within life sciences (see section 3.3).

The evaluation committees will assess the administrative units based on all the criteria specified in Chapter 2. The assessment of research groups delivered by the expert panels will be a part of the evidence base for the committees' assessments of administrative units. See figure 1 below.

The evaluation committee has sole responsibility for the assessments and any recommendations in the report. The evaluation committee reaches a judgement on the research based on the administrative units and research groups' self-assessments provided by the RPOs, any additional documents provided by the RCN, and interviews with representatives of the administrative units. The additional documents will include a standardised analysis of research personnel and publications provided by the RCN.

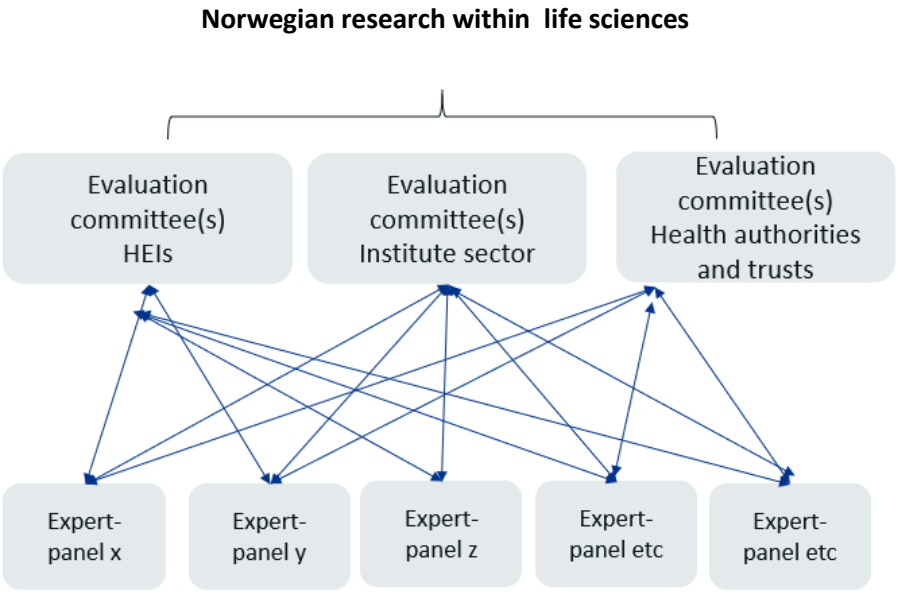

Figure 1. Evaluation committees and expert panels

The evaluation committee takes international trends and developments in science and society into account when forming its judgement. When judging the quality and relevance of the research, the committees shall bear in mind the specific tasks and/or strategic goals that the administrative unit has set for itself including sectoral purposes (see section 2.4 above).

3.2 Accuracy of factual information

The administrative unit under evaluation should be consulted to check the factual information before the final report is delivered to the RCN and the board of the institution hosting the administrative unit.

3.3 National level report

Finally, the RCN will ask the chairs of the evaluation committees to produce a national-level report that builds on the assessments of administrative units and the national-level assessments produced by the expert panels. The committee chairs will present their assessment of Norwegian research in life sciences at the national level in a separate report that pays specific attention to:

- Strengths and weaknesses of the research area in the international context
- The general resource situation regarding funding, personnel and infrastructure
- PhD training, recruitment, mobility and diversity
- Research cooperation nationally and internationally
- Societal impact and the role of research in society, including Open Science

This national-level assessment should be presented to the RCN.

Appendix A: Terms of References (ToR)

[Text in red to be filled in by the Research-performing organisations (RPOs)]

The board of [RPO] mandates the evaluation committee appointed by the Research Council of Norway (RCN) to assess [administrative unit] based on the following Terms of Reference.

Assessment
You are asked to assess the organisation, quality and diversity of research conducted by [administrative unit] as well as its relevance to institutional and sectoral purposes, and to society at large. You should do so by judging the unit's performance based on the following five assessment criteria (a. to e.). Be sure to take current international trends and developments in science and society into account in your analysis.

a) Strategy, resources and organisation
b) Research production, quality and integrity
c) Diversity and equality
d) Relevance to institutional and sectoral purposes
e) Relevance to society

For a description of these criteria, see Chapter 2 of the life sciences evaluation protocol. Please provide a written assessment for each of the five criteria. Please also provide recommendations for improvement. We ask you to pay special attention to the following [n] aspects in your assessment:

1. …
2. …
3. …
4. …

…

[To be completed by the board: specific aspects that the evaluation committee should focus on – they may be related to a) strategic issues, or b) an administrative unit's specific tasks.]

In addition, we would like your report to provide a qualitative assessment of [administrative unit] as a whole in relation to its strategic targets. The committee assesses the strategy that the administrative unit intends to pursue in the years ahead and the extent to which it will be capable of meeting its targets for research and society during this period based on available resources and competence. The committee is also invited to make recommendations concerning these two subjects.

Documentation
The necessary documentation will be made available by the life sciences secretariat at Technopolis Group.

The documents will include the following:

- a report on research personnel and publications within life sciences commissioned by RCN
- a self-assessment based on a template provided by the life sciences secretariat
- [to be completed by the board]

Interviews with representatives from the evaluated units
Interviews with the [administrative unit] will be organised by the evaluation secretariat. Such interviews can be organised as a site visit, in another specified location in Norway or as a video conference.

Statement on impartiality and confidence
The assessment should be carried out in accordance with the *Regulations on Impartiality and Confidence in the Research Council of Norway*. A statement on the impartiality of the committee members has been recorded by the RCN as a part of the appointment process. The impartiality and confidence of committee and panel members should be confirmed when evaluation data from [the administrative unit] are made available to the committee and the panels, and before any assessments are made based on these data. The RCN should be notified if questions concerning impartiality and confidence are raised by committee members during the evaluation process.

Assessment report
We ask you to report your findings in an assessment report drawn up in accordance with a format specified by the life sciences secretariat. The committee may suggest adjustments to this format at its first meeting. A draft report should be sent to the [administrative unit] and RCN by [date]. The [administrative unit] should be allowed to check the report for factual inaccuracies; if such inaccuracies are found, they should be reported to the life sciences secretariat no later than two weeks after receipt of the draft report. After the committee has made the amendments judged necessary, a corrected version of the assessment report should be sent to the board of [the RPO] and the RCN no later than two weeks after all feedback on inaccuracies has been received from [administrative unit].

Appendix B: Data sources

The lists below shows the most relevant data providers and types of data to be included in the evaluation. Data are categorised in two broad categories according to the data source: National registers and self-assessments prepared by the RFOs. The RCN will commission an analysis of data in national registers (R&D-expenditure, personnel, publications etc.) to be used as support for the committees' assessment of administrative units. The analysis will include a set of indicators related to research personnel and publications.

- **National directorates and data providers**
- Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (HK-dir)
- Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT)
- Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research (SIKT)
- Research Council of Norway (RCN)
- Statistics Norway (SSB)

National registers

1) R&D-expenditure
    a. SSB: R&D statistics
    b. SSB: Key figures for research institutes
    c. HK-dir: Database for Statistics on Higher Education (DBH)
    d. RCN: Project funding database (DVH)
    e. EU-funding: eCorda
2) Research personnel
    a. SSB: The Register of Research personnel
    b. SSB: The Doctoral Degree Register
    c. RCN: Key figures for research institutes
    d. HK-dir: Database for Statistics on Higher Education (DBH)
3) Research publications
    a. SIKT: Cristin - Current research information system in Norway
    b. SIKT: Norwegian Infrastructure for Bibliometrics
    (full bibliometric data incl. citations and co-authors)
4) Education
    a. HK-dir/DBH: Students and study points
    b. NOKUT: Study barometer
    c. NOKUT: National Teacher Survey
5) Sector-oriented research
    a. RCN: Key figures for research institutes
6) Patient treatments and health care services
    a. Research & Innovation expenditure in the health trusts
    b. Measurement of research and innovation activity in the health trusts
    c. Collaboration between health trusts and HEIs
    d. Funding of research and innovation in the health trusts
    e. Classification of medical and health research using HRCS (HO21 monitor)

Self-assessments

1) Administrative units
    a. *Self-assessment covering all assessment criteria*
    b. Administrative data on funding sources
    c. Administrative data on personnel
    d. Administrative data on the division of staff resources between research and other activities (teaching, dissemination etc.)
    e. Administrative data on research infrastructure and other support structures
    f. SWOT analysis
    g. Any supplementary data needed to assess performance related to the strategic goals and specific tasks of the unit

2) Research groups
    a. *Self-assessment covering the first two assessment criteria (see Table 1)*
    b. Administrative data on funding sources
    c. Administrative data on personnel
    d. Administrative data on contribution to sectoral purposes: teaching, commissioned work, clinical work [will be assessed at committee level]
    e. Publication profiles
    f. Example publications and other research results (databases, software etc.) The examples should be accompanied by an explanation of the groups' specific contributions to the result
    g. Any supplementary data needed to assess performance related to the benchmark defined by the administrative unit

The table below shows how different types of evaluation data may be relevant to different evaluation criteria. Please note that the self-assessment produced by the administrative units in the form of a written account of management, activities, results etc. should cover all criteria. A template for the self-assessment of research groups and administrative units will be commissioned by the RCN from the life sciences secretariat for the evaluation.

Table 1. Types of evaluation data per criterion

Evaluation units / Criteria	Research groups	Administrative units
Strategy, resources and organisation	Self-assessment Administrative data	Self-assessment National registers Administrative data SWOT analysis
Research production and quality	Self-assessment Example publications (and other research results)	Self-assessment National registers
Diversity, equality and integrity		Self-assessment National registers Administrative data
Relevance to institutional and sectoral purposes		Self-assessment Administrative data
Relevance to society		Self-assessment National registers Impact cases
Overall assessment	*Data related to:* *Benchmark defined by administrative unit*	*Data related to:* *Strategic goals and specific tasks of the admin. unit*

Evaluation of Medicine and Health (EVALMEDHELSE) 2023-2024

Self- assessment for administrative units

Date of dispatch: **15 September 2023**
Deadline for submission: **31 January 2024**

Institution (name and short name):_____
Administrative unit (name and short name): _____
Date:_____
Contact person:_____
Contact details (email):_____

Content

Introduction

The primary aim of the evaluation is to reveal and confirm the quality and the relevance of research performed at Norwegian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), the institute sector and the health trusts. These institutions will henceforth be collectively referred to as research performing organisations (RPOs). The evaluation report(s) will provide a set of recommendations to the RPOs, the Research Council of Norway (RCN) and the responsible and concerned ministries. The results of the evaluation will also be disseminated for the benefit of potential students, users of research and society at large.

You have been invited to complete this self-assessment as an administrative unit. The self-assessment contains questions regarding the unit's research- and innovation related activities and developments over years 2012-2022. All submitted data will be evaluated by international evaluation committees. The administrative unit´s research groups will be assessed by international expert panels who report their assessment to the relevant evaluation committee.

Deadline for submitting self- assessments to the Research Council of Norway – 31 January 2024
As an administrative unit you are responsible for collecting completed self-assessments for each of the research groups that belong to the administrative unit. The research groups need to submit their completed self-assessment to the administrative unit no later than 26 January 2024. The administrative unit will submit the research groups' completed self-assessments and the administrative unit's own completed self-assessment to the Research Council within 31 January 2024.

Please use the following format when naming your document: name of the institution and short name of the administrative unit, e.g. *NTNU_FacMedHealthSci* and send it to evalmedhelse@forskningsradet.no within 31 January 2024.

For questions concerning the self-assessment or EVALMEDHELSE in general, please contact RCN at evalmedhelse@forskningsradet.no.

Thank you!

Guidelines for completing the self-assessment

- Please read the entire self-assessment document before answering.
- The evaluation language is English.
- Please be sure that all documents which are linked to in the self- assessment are in English and are accessible.
- The page format must be A4 with 2 cm margins, single spacing and Calibri and 11-point font.
- The self-assessment follows the same structure as the evaluation protocol. In order to be evaluated on all criteria, the administrative unit must answer all questions.
- Information should be provided by link to webpages i.e. strategy and other planning documents.
  - Provide information – provide documents and other relevant data or figures about the administrative unit, for example strategy and other planning documents.
  - Describe – explain and present using contextual information about the administrative unit and inform the reader about the administrative unit.
  - Reflect – comment in a reflective and evaluative manner how the administrative unit operates.
- Data on personnel should refer to reporting to DBH on 1 October 2022 for HEIs and to the yearly reporting for 2022 for the institute sector and the health trusts. Other data should refer to 31 December 2022, if not specified otherwise.
- Questions in 4.3c should **ONLY** be answered by administrative units responsible for the Cand.med. degree programme, cf. Evaluation of the Professional programme in Medicine (NOKUT).
- It is possible to extend the textboxes when filling in the from. **NB!** A completed self- assessment cannot exceed 50 pages (pdf file) excluding question 4.3.c. The evaluation committees are not requested to read more than the maximum of 50 pages. Pages exceeding maximum limit of 50 pages **might not** be evaluated.
- Submit the self- assessment as a pdf (max 50 pages). Before submission, please be sure that all text are readable after the conversion of the document to pdf. The administrative unit is responsible for submitting the self-assessment of the administrative unit together with the self-assessments of the belonging research group(s) to evalmedhelse@forskningsradet.no within **31 January 2024.**

Please note that information you write in the self- assessment and the links to documents/webpages in the self- assessment are the only available information (data material) for the evaluation committee.

In exceptional cases, documents/publications that are not openly available must be submitted as attachment(s) to the self- assessment (pdf file(s)).

1.Strategy, resources and organisation

1.1 Research strategy

Describe the main strategic goals for research and innovation of the administrative unit. You may include the following:

- How are these goals related to institutional strategies and scientific priorities?
- Describe how the administrative unit's strategies and scientific priorities are related to the "specific aspects that the evaluation committee should focus on" indicated in your Terms of Reference (ToR)
- Describe the main fields and focus of research and innovation in the administrative unit
- Describe the planned research-field impact; planned policy impact and planned societal impact
- Describe how the strategy is followed-up in the allocation of resources and other measures
- Describe the most important occasions where priorities are made (i.e., announcement of new positions, applying for external funding, following up on evaluations)
- If there is no research strategy – please explain why

Table 1. Administrative unit`s strategies

For each category present up to 5 documents which are most relevant for the administrative unit. Please delete lines which are not in use.

Research strategy		
No.	**Title**	**Link**
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
Outreach strategies		
No.	**Title**	**Link**
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
Open science policy		
No.	**Title**	**Link**
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

1.2 Organisation of research

a) Describe the organisation of research and innovation activities/projects at the administrative unit, including how responsibilities for research and other purposes (education, knowledge exchange, patient treatment, researcher training, outreach activities etc.) are distributed and delegated.

b) Describe how you work to maximise synergies between the different purposes of the administrative unit (education, knowledge exchange, patient treatment, researcher training, outreach activities etc.).

1.3 Research staff

Describe the profile of research personnel at the administrative unit in terms of position and gender. Institutions in the higher education sector should use the categories used in DBH, https://dbh.hkdir.no/datainnhold/kodeverk/stillingskoder.

RCN has commissioned reports from Statistics Norway (SSB) on personnel for the administrative units included in the evaluation. These reports will be made available to the units early November 2023.

Only a subset of the administrative units submitted to the evaluation is directly identifiable in the national statistics. Therefore, we ask all administrative units to provide data on their R&D personnel. Institutions that are directly identifiable in the national statistics (mainly higher education) are invited to use the figures provided in the report delivered by Statistics Norway. Please delete lines which are not in use.

Table 2. Research staff

	Position by category	**No. of researcher per category**	**Share of women per category (%)**	**No. of researchers who are part of multiple (other) research groups at the admin unit**	**No. of temporary positions**
No. of Personell by position	Position A (Fill in)				
	Position B (Fill in)				
	Position C (Fill in)				
	Position D (Fill in)				

1.4 Researcher careers opportunities

a) Describe the structures and practices to support researcher careers and help early-career researchers to make their way into the profession.

b) Describe how research time is distributed among staff including criteria for research leave/sabbaticals (forskningstermin/undervisningsfri).

c) Describe research mobility options.

1.5 Research funding

a) Describe the funding sources of the administrative unit. Indicate the administrative unit´s total yearly budget and the share of the unit's budget dedicated to research.

b) Give an overview of the administrative unit's competitive national and/or international grants last five years (2018-2022).

Table 3. R&D funding sources
Please indicate R&D funding sources for the administrative unit for the period 2018-2022 (average NOK per year, last five years).

For Higher Education Institutions: Share of basic grant (grunnbevilgning) used for R&D[1] **For Research Institutes and Health Trusts: Direct R&D funding from Ministries (per ministry)**	
Name of ministry	NOK

National grants (bidragsinntekter) (NOK)	
From the ministries and underlying directorates	
From industry	
From public sector	
Other national grants	
Total National grants	
National contract research (oppdragsinntekter)[2] (NOK)	
From the ministries and underlying directorates	
From industry	

[1] Shares may be calculated based on full time equivalents (FTE) allocated to research compared to total FTE in administrative unit

[2] For research institutes only research activities should be included from section 1.3 in the yearly reporting

From public sector	
Other national contract research	
Total contract research	
International grants (NOK)	
From the European Union	
From industry	
Other international grants	
Total international grants	
Funding related to public management (forvaltningsoppgaver) or (if applicable) funding related to special hospital tasks, if any	
Total funding related to public management/special hospital tasks	
Total all R&D budget items (except basic grant)	

1.6 Collaboration

Describe the administrative unit's policy towards national and international collaboration partners, the type of the collaborations the administrative unit have with the partners, how the collaboration is put to practice as well as cross-sectorial and interdisciplinary collaborations.

- Reflect of how successful the administrative unit has been in meeting its aspirations for collaborations
- Reflect on the importance of different types of collaboration for the administrative unit: National and international collaborations. Collaborations with different sectors, including public, private and third sector
- Reflect on the added value of these collaborations to the administrative unit and Norwegian research system

Table 4a. The main national collaborative constellations with the administrative unit
Please categorise the collaboration according to the most important national partner(s): 5-10 institutions in the period 2012-2022. Please delete lines which are not in use.

National collaborations

Collaboration with national institutions – 1 -10	
Name of main collaboration or collaborative project with the admin unit	
Name of partner institution(s)	
Sector of partner/institution(s)/sectors involved	
Impacts and relevance of the collaboration	

Table 4b. The main international collaborative constellations with the administrative unit
Please categorise the collaboration according to the most important international partner(s): 5-10 international institutions in the period 2012-2022. Please delete lines which are not in use.

International collaborations

Collaboration with international institutions – 1-10	
Name of main collaboration or collaborative project with the admin unit	
Name of partner institution(s)	
Sector of partner/institution(s)/sectors involved	

Impacts and relevance of the collaboration	

1.7 Open science policies

a) Describe the institutional policies, approaches, and activities to the Open Science areas which may include the following:

- Open access to publications
- Open access to research data and implementation of FAIR data principles
- Open-source software/tools
- Open access to educational resources
- Open peer review
- Citizen science and/or involvement of stakeholders / user groups
- Skills and training for Open Science

b) Describe the most important contributions and impact of the administrative unit's researchers towards the different Open Science areas cf. 1.7a above.

c) Describe the institutional policy regarding ownership of research data, data management, and confidentiality. Is the use of data management plans implemented at the administrative unit?

1.8 SWOT analysis for administrative units

Instructions: Please complete a SWOT analysis for your administrative unit. Reflect on what are the major internal Strengths and Weaknesses as well as external Threats and Opportunities for your research and innovation activities/projects and research environment. Assess what the present Strengths enable in the future and what kinds of Threats are related to the Weaknesses. Consider your scientific expertise and achievements, funding, facilities, organisation and management.

Internal	**Strengths**	**Weaknesses**
External	**Opportunities**	**Threats**

2. Research production, quality and integrity

2.1 Research quality and integrity

Please see the bibliometric analysis for the administrative unit developed by NIFU (available by the end of October, 2023).

a) Describe the scientific focus areas of the research conducted at the administrative unit, including the unit's contribution to these areas.

b) Describe the administrative unit's policy for research integrity, including preventative measures when integrity is at risk, or violated.

2.2 Research infrastructures

a) Participation in national infrastructure

Describe the most important participation in the national infrastructures listed in the Norwegian roadmap for research infrastructures (Norsk veikart for forskningsinfrastruktur) including as host institution(s).

Table 5. Participation in national infrastructure

Please present up to 5 participations in the national infrastructures listed in the Norwegian roadmap for research infrastructures (Norsk veikart for forskningsinfrastruktur) for each area that were the most important to your administrative unit.

Areas in roadmap	Name of research infrastructure	Period (from year to year)	Description	Link to website

b) Participation in international infrastructures

Describe the most important participation in the international infrastructures funded by the ministries (Norsk deltakelse i internasjonale forskningsorganisasjoner finansiert av departementene).

Table 6. Participation in international infrastructure

Please describe up to 5 participations in international infrastructures for each area that have been most important to your administrative unit.

Project	Name	Period (from year to year)	Description	Link to infrastructure

c) Participation in European (ESFRI) infrastructures

Describe the most important participation in European (ESFRI) infrastructures (Norske medlemskap i infrastrukturer i ESFRI roadmap) including as host institution(s).

Table 7. Participation in infrastructures on the ESFRI Roadmap
Please give a description of up to 5 participations that have been most important to your administrative unit.

Social sciences and the humanities				
Name	**ESFRI-project**	**Summary of participation**	**Period (from year to year)**	**Link**

d) Access to research infrastructures
Describe access to relevant national and/or international research infrastructures for your researchers. Considering both physical and digital infrastructure.

e) FAIR- principles
Describe what is done at the unit to fulfil the FAIR-principles.

3. Diversity and equality

Describe the policy and practices to protect against any form of discrimination and to promote diversity in the administrative unit.

Table 8. Administrative unit policy against discrimination
Give a description of up to 5 documents that are the most relevant. If the administrative unit uses the strategies, policies, etc. of a larger institution, then these documents should be referred to.
Please delete lines which are not in use.

No.	**Name**	**Valid period**	**Link**
1			

4. Relevance to institutional and sectorial purposes

4.1 Sector specific impact

Describe whether the administrative unit has activities aimed at achieving sector-specific objectives or focusing on contributing to the knowledge base in general. Describe activities connected to sector-specific objectives, the rationale for participation and achieved and/or expected impacts. Please refer to chapter 2.4 in the evaluation protocol.

- Alternatively, describe whether the activities of the administrative unit are aimed at contribution to the knowledge base in general. Describe the rationale for this approach and the impacts of the unit's work to the knowledge base.

4.2 Research innovation and commercialisation

a) Describe the administrative unit's practices for innovation and commercialisation.

b) Describe the motivation among the research staff in doing innovation and commercialisation activities.

c) Describe how innovation and commercialisation is supported at the administrative unit.

Table 9. Policies for innovation including IP policies, new patents, licenses, start-up/spin-off guidelines
Describe up to 5 documents of the administrative unit's policies for innovation, including IP policies, new patents, licenses, start-up/spin-off guidelines, etc., that are the most relevant. If the administrative unit uses the strategies, policies, etc. of a larger institution, then present these documents. Please delete lines which are not in use.

No.	Name	Valid period	Link
1			

Table 10. Administrative description of successful innovation and commercialisation results
Please describe up to 10 successful innovation and commercialisation results at your administrative unit in the period 2012-2022. Please delete lines which are not in use.

No.	Name of innovation and commercial results	Link	Description of successful innovation and commercialisation result.
1			

4.3 Higher education institutions

a) Reflect how research at the administrative unit contributes towards master and PhD-level education provision, at your institutions and beyond.

b) Describe the opportunities for master students to become involved in research activities at the administrative unit.

c) **ONLY** for administrative units responsible for the Cand.med. degree programme, cf. Evaluation of the Professional programme in Medicine (NOKUT).

- Reflect on how research at the administrative unit contributes towards the quality of the Cand.med. degree programme at your institutions and beyond.
- Describe the different opportunities for students on the Cand.med. degree programme to become involved in research activities at the administrative unit, and the extent to which students use those opportunities.

4.4 Research institutes

a) Describe how the research and innovation activities/projects at the administrative unit contribute to the knowledge base for policy development, sustainable development, and societal and industrial transformations more generally.

b) Describe the most important research activities with partners outside of research organisations.

4.5 Health trusts

a) Reflect on how the administrative unit's clinical research, innovation and commercialisation contribute towards development, assessment and implementation of new diagnostic methods, treatment, and healthcare technologies.

b) Reflect on how research at the unit contributes towards the quality of relevant education programme at your institutions or beyond.

c) Describe the different opportunities for students on relevant educational programmes to become involved in research activities at the administrative unit, and the extent to which students use those opportunities.

5. Relevance to society

Reflect on the administrative unit's contribution towards the Norwegian Long-term plan for research and higher education, societal challenges more widely, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

5.1 Impact cases

Please use the attached template for impact cases. Each impact case should be submitted as an attachment (pdf) to the self-assessment.

Impact case guidelines

Each case study should include sufficiently clear and detailed information to enable the evaluation committee to make judgements based on the information it contains, without making inferences, gathering additional material, following up references or relying on members' prior knowledge. References to other sources of information will be used for verification purposes only, not as a means for the evaluation committee to gather further information to inform judgements.

In this evaluation, impact is defined as an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia.

Timeframes

- The impact must have occurred between 2012 and 2022
- Some of the underpinning research should have been published in 2012 or later
- The administrative units are encouraged to prioritise recent cases

Page limit

Each completed case study template will be limited to **five pages** in length. Within the annotated template below, indicative guidance is provided about the expected maximum length limit of each section, but institutions will have flexibility to exceed these so long as the case study as a whole remains no longer than **five pages** (font Calibri, font size 11). Please write the text into the framed template under the sections 1–5 below. The guiding text that stands there now, can be deleted.

Maximum number of cases permitted per administrative unit

For up to 10 researchers: one case; for 10 to 30 researchers: two cases; for 30-50 researchers: three cases; for 50-100 researchers: four cases, and up to five cases for units exceeding 100 researchers.

Naming and numbering of cases

Please use the standardised short name for the administrative unit, and the case number for the unit (1,2,3, etc) in the headline of the case. Each case should be stored as a separate PDF-document with the file name: [Name of the institution and name of the administrative unit] [case number]

Publication of cases

RCN plans to publish all impact cases in a separate evaluation report. By submitting the case the head of the administrative units consents to the publication of the case. Please indicate below if a case may not be made public for reasons of confidentiality.

If relevant, describe any reason to keep this case confidential:

Please write the text here

[Name of the institution and name of the administrative unit] [case number]

Institution:
Administrative unit:
Title of case study:
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:
Period when staff involved in the underpinning research were employed by the submitting institution:
Period when the impact occurred:

1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)
This section should briefly state what specific impact is being described in the case study.

2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)
This section should outline the key research insights or findings that underpinned the impact, and provide details of what research was undertaken, when, and by whom. This research may be a body of work produced over a number of years or may be the output(s) of a particular project. References to specific research outputs that embody the research described in this section, and evidence of its quality, should be provided in the next section. Details of the following should be provided in this section:

- The nature of the research insights or findings which relate to the impact claimed in the case study.
- An outline of what the underpinning research produced by the submitted unit was (this may relate to one or more research outputs, projects or programmes).
- Dates of when it was carried out.
- Names of the key researchers and what positions they held at the administrative unit at the time of the research (where researchers joined or left the administrative unit during this time, these dates must also be stated).
- Any relevant key contextual information about this area of research.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)
This section should provide references to key outputs from the research described in the previous section, and evidence about the quality of the research. All forms of output cited as underpinning research will be considered equitably, with no distinction being made between the types of output referenced. Include the following details for each cited output:
- Author(s)
- Title
- Year of publication
- Type of output and other relevant details required to identify the output (for example, DOI, journal title and issue)
- Details to enable the panel to gain access to the output, if required (for example, a DOI or URL).

All outputs cited in this section must be capable of being made available to panels. If they are not available in the public domain, the administrative unit must be able to provide them if requested by RCN or the evaluation secretariate.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)
This section should provide a narrative, with supporting evidence, to explain:

- How the research underpinned (made a distinct and material contribution to) the impact;
- The nature and extent of the impact.

The following should be provided:
- A clear explanation of the process or means through which the research led to, underpinned or made a contribution to the impact (for example, how it was disseminated, how it came to influence users or beneficiaries, or how it came to be exploited, taken up or applied).

- Where the submitted administrative unit's research was part of a wider body of research that contributed to the impact (for example, where there has been research collaboration with other institutions), the case study should specify the particular contribution of the submitted administrative unit's research and acknowledge other key research contributions.
- Details of the beneficiaries – who or what community, constituency or organisation has benefitted, been affected or impacted on.
- Details of the nature of the impact – how they have benefitted, been affected or impacted on.
- Evidence or indicators of the extent of the impact described, as appropriate to the case being made.
- Dates of when these impacts occurred.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of ten references)

Institution	Administrative unit	Name of research group	Expert panel
UiA	Faculty of Health and Sport Sciences	CeH	Panel 4a
UiA	Faculty of Health and Sport Sciences	HEIFA (Health and quality of life in a family perspective)	Panel 4a
UiA	Faculty of Health and Sport Sciences	PaHLS (Physical activity and health across the lifeSpan)	Panel 4b
UiA	Faculty of Health and Sport Sciences	PRC-LN	Panel 4a

Scales for research group assessment

Use whole integers only – no fractions!

Organisational dimension

Score	Organisational environment
5	An organisational environment that is outstanding for supporting the production of excellent research.
4	An organisational environment that is very strong for supporting the production of excellent research.
3	An organisational environment that is adequate for supporting the production of excellent research.
2	An organisational environment that is modest for supporting the production of excellent research.
1	An organisational environment that is not supportive for the production of excellent research.

Quality dimension

The quality dimension consists of two judgements: 1) Research and publication quality, and 2) Research group's contribution. The first judgement is defined as follows:

Score	Research and publication quality	Supporting explanation
5	Quality that is outstanding in terms of originality, significance, and rigour.	**The quality of the research is world leadin**g in terms of quality, and is comparable to the best work internationally in the same area of research. The publications submitted provide evidence that the work of the group meets the highest international standards in terms of originality, significance, and rigour. Work at this level should be a key international reference in its area.
4	Quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which falls short of the highest standards of excellence.	**The quality of the research is internationally excellent**. The research is clearly of an international standard, with a very good level of quality in terms of originality, significance, and rigour. Work at this level can arouse significant interest in the international academic community, and international journals with the most rigorous standards of publication (irrespective of the place or language of publication) could publish work of this level.
3	Quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.	**The quality of the research is sufficient to achieve some international recognition.** It would be perceived nationally as strong and may occasionally reach an internationally recognised level in terms of originality, significance and rigour. Internationally recognised journals could publish some work of this level.
2	Quality that meets the published definition of research for the purposes of this assessment.	The international academic community would deem the research to be nationally acceptable, but below world standards. Legitimate nationally recognised peer-reviewed journals could publish work of this level.
1	Quality that falls below the published definition of research for the purposes of this assessment[1].	**The quality of the research** is well below international level, and is unpublishable in legitimate peer-reviewed research journals.

[1] A publication has to meet all of the criteria below:

Societal impact dimension

The societal impact dimension is also composed of two judgements, defined as presented in the table below.

Score	Research group's societal contribution, taking into consideration the resources available to the group	Score	User involvement
5	The group has contributed extensively to economic, societal and/or cultural development in Norway and/or internationally.	5	Societal partner involvement is outstanding – partners have had an important role in all parts of the research process, from problem formulation to the publication and/or process or product innovation.
4	The group's contribution to economic, societal and/or cultural development in Norway and/or internationally is very considerable given what is expected from groups in the same research field.	4	Societal partners have very considerable involvement in all parts of the research process, from problem formulation to the publication and/or process or product innovation.
3	The group's contribution to economic, societal and/or cultural development in Norway and/or internationally is on par with what is expected from groups in the same research field.	3	Societal partners have considerable involvement in the research process, from problem formulation to the publication and/or process or product innovation.
2	The group's contribution to economic, societal and/or cultural development in Norway and/or internationally is modest given what is expected from groups in the same research field.	2	Societal partners have a modest part in the research process, from problem formulation to the publication and/or process or product innovation.
1	There is little documentation of contributions from the group to economic, societal and/or cultural development in Norway and/or internationally.	1	There is little documentation of societal partners' participation in the research process, from problem formulation to the publication and/or process or product innovation.

Methods and limitations

Methods

The evaluation is based on documentary evidence and online interviews with the representatives of Administrative Unit.

The documentary inputs to the evaluation were:

- Evaluation Protocol Evaluation of life sciences in Norway 2022-2023
- Administrative Unit´s Terms of Reference
- Administrative Unit's self-assessment report
- Administrative Unit's impact cases
- Administrative Unit's research groups evaluation reports
- Panel reports from the Expert panels
- Bibliometric data (*NIFU Nordic Institute for Studies of innovation, research and education*)
- Personnel data (*Statistics Norway (SSB)*)
- Funding data – The Research Council´s contribution to biosciences research (*RCN*)
- Extract from the Survey for academic staff and the Student Survey (*Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT)*)

After the documentary review, the Committee held a meeting and discussed an initial assessment against the assessment criteria and defined questions for the interview with the Administrative Unit. The Committee shared the interview questions with the Administrative Unit two weeks before the interview.

Following the documentary review, the Committee interviewed the Administrative Unit in an hour-long virtual meeting to fact-check the Committee's understanding and refine perceptions. The Administrative Unit presented answers to the Committee's questions and addressed other follow-up questions.

After the online interview, the Committee attended the final meeting to review the initial assessment in light of the interview and make any final adjustments.

A one-page summary of the Administrative Unit was developed based on the information from the self-assessment, the research group assessment, and the interview. The Administrative Unit had the opportunity to fact-check this summary. The Administrative Unit approved the summary without adjustments. ***(Adjust the text if the AU asked for corrections. Include the AU request and explain what adjustments were made).***

Limitations

(Choose one of the three options below and delete the others. Feel free to elaborate slightly if necessary. For example, if you choose option 3, explain the missing information. Note that the Committee can provide detailed feedback and suggestions on improving the evaluation in the Memorandum to the RCN. This section has to remain concise and only summarise whether the information was or was not sufficient.)

(1) The Committee judged the information received through documentary inputs and the interview with the Administrative Unit sufficient to complete the evaluation.

(2) The Committee judged that the Administrative Unit self-assessment report was insufficient to assess all evaluation criteria fully. However, the interview with the Administrative Unit filled gaps in the Committee's understanding, and the information was sufficient to complete the evaluation.
(3) The Committee judged that the Administrative Unit’s self-assessment report was insufficient to assess all evaluation criteria fully, and some information gaps remained after the interview with the Administrative Unit.

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