



UNIVERSITY OF
GOTHENBURG

REVISED 2016

VISION 2020

Quality-driven
research, education
and cooperation in an
inspiring environment,
strong social responsibility
and global **engagement**
enable the University of
Gothenburg to contribute
to **a better future.**

2020



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FOREWORD

Vision 2020 lays down the long-term aims to achieve continued successful development of the University of Gothenburg in the period 2013–2020. The watchwords for the efforts are a quality-driven organisation characterised by social responsibility and global engagement in an inspiring work environment. The University of Gothenburg's activities shall be based on complete academic environments with research, education and cooperation with the surrounding society. The vision identifies a number of strategies to achieve the stated objectives.

Four years have passed since the University Board finalised Vision 2020, and the present version can be considered a midway review. Some revisions have been made based on experiences gained in the work to implement the vision and as a result of changes observed both at the University and in the surrounding society. The biggest change in the document is that cooperation/outreach no longer comprises a separate section but instead has been integrated into the sections on research and education in order to better reflect the University's current approach in this area.



Cecilia Schelin Seidegård
Chair of the University Board



Pam Fredman
Vice-Chancellor

OUR TRADITION...

The University of Gothenburg has a proud tradition. Engaged citizens came together already in 1891 to contribute their resources and ideas for the future of Gothenburg University College – midtown, by the sea, and in constant interaction with the surrounding society and the rest of the world.

Over 120 years later, the distinct sense of social responsibility, the openness to the rest of the world and the downtown location remain central features. The University has strong local and regional ties at the same time as the research, education and cooperation are characterised by strong global engagement.

This implies that we do not merely observe and focus on current issues – the University of Gothenburg is also an active force in the overall development of society.



... AND OUR VALUE BASE

The University is an independent institution in the heart of society. Thus, freedom in terms of how research and education are planned and conducted is a key factor at the University of Gothenburg. Thanks to our tradition, today we have a broad and attractive university that features wide-ranging involvement in society at large.

STRONG INTEGRITY MAKES US DYNAMIC

Our work is and will remain morally and intellectually independent of any political, ideological and economic interests. Our work is also characterised by a critical approach, strong integrity and a democratic internal organisation. As truth-seeking is at the core of a university's operations, the question "Why?" is our most important guiding instrument. Since the quality of research and education constitutes our most important capital, we must constantly make efforts to attend to, evaluate and further develop everything we do.

OPENNESS GIVES NEW IMPULSES

The University of Gothenburg is open to and in vibrant interaction with its surroundings. It is also inviting and accessible. We cooperate closely, including information exchange, with a great number of actors outside academia. Our multifaceted approach

provides for fruitful meetings between differing knowledge realms and scientific perspectives – and hence also for increased benefit to society. It is clearly in line with our strong civic engagement – the need for cooperation keeps increasing as more and more of modern society's challenges demand holistic solutions that span across many vastly different fields of expertise.

OUR VALUES SET THE DIRECTION

The University is constantly developing in order to respond to new internal and external demands. These efforts are based on an inspiring work environment where both staff and students are enabled to grow and develop. We strive for an even gender distribution and equal conditions in all parts of the organisation. It is what you do and not who you are that matters at the University of Gothenburg.

STUDENT INFLUENCE GIVES QUALITY

The students shall always be at the centre of what we do, both prior to, during and after their studies. Broad recruiting, a focus on pedagogical development, strong student influence, active alumni work and opportunities for lifelong learning are key factors.

ENGAGEMENT GIVES NEW SOLUTIONS

Our strong civic engagement gives us energy to respond to changes in the world around us and to find cross-boundary solutions. We educate democratic citizens with respect for basic values such as human freedoms and rights. Our civic responsibility also encompasses the environmental profile that characterises the University of Gothenburg. Sustainable development is important to us; we always consider the long-term social, economic and ecological consequences and allow them to guide our operations.

WE BUILD COMPLETE ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENTS

The University of Gothenburg has always emphasised cooperation between research and education. This culture, which emerged already in the days of Gothenburg University College, was reinforced when many professional programmes were added in the 1970s, and today this spirit is more pronounced than ever. As a result, the University's staff and students see complete academic environments that include research, education and cooperation with society at large as something completely natural.

INTERACTION FACILITATES DEVELOPMENT

The complete academic environments are based on interaction between research, education and cooperation. This implies that all education – regardless of level – is linked to research, and that all research is linked to education. This gives all students at the University of Gothenburg a direct link to research. The environment shall contribute to cross-boundary research and education collaboration, and shall be characterised by cooperation with both public and private actors from across society.

SPREADING NEW IDEAS

Complete environments stimulate dynamic interaction between research and education on the one hand and business and industry and the rest of society on the other. The interaction between the environments and the surrounding society allows for new ideas to spread to a wide range of actors. It facilitates an inflow of new ideas and new knowledge, which in turn strengthens and adds to the disciplinary environments. It also implies an opportunity for continuous assessment of the quality of our work, providing for appropriate prioritisations to be made.

A SUPPORTING STRUCTURE

The complete academic environment requires a well-functioning infrastructure. This applies both within the University of Gothenburg and to our cooperation nationally and internationally. The academic environment requires digitalisation and new interactive channels for everybody – whether it be students, researchers, teachers or staff with other tasks. Libraries and other sources of information are crucial to the quality of research, education and cooperation. The focus on coherent campus areas implies new opportunities.

BROAD COLLABORATION IS NEEDED

Strong academic environments require an ability to collaborate with other higher education institutions. It is important to further develop Gothenburg as a university city together with Chalmers, yet it is also important that the cooperation with other higher education institutions is strengthened not only regionally but also nationally and internationally. Broad cooperation contributes to research and education of high quality.

OUR VISION WILL SET THE DIRECTION

The tradition and value base give the University of Gothenburg its identity. As a result of its great diversity, the University has created new and interesting opportunities for research, education and cooperation, and has consequently developed into a large and attractive university. Now it is our responsibility to take the next step into the future.

OUR CONDITIONS

The University of Gothenburg is subject to a strong pressure to change. We are affected by everything from university ranking systems, performance-based grants for research and education and tuition fees for non-European student to a completely new competitive situation with new education providers and digital solutions. All of this alters the conditions we are facing and also challenges our unique role as an independent knowledge producer.

OUR VISION

To secure that we have the required autonomy and that we are able to respond to all of the changes around us, we must clearly define our line of action for the future – both to ourselves and to our partners. This is the background to Vision 2020.

Four basic principles shall guide the University of Gothenburg: (1) Our research and education shall be characterised by a quest for high quality. (2) Our standpoints and decisions shall be based on a clear responsibility for the development of society. (3) Our work shall be guided by a global engagement that constantly reminds us of our role in the world. (4) An inspiring work environment is an important prerequisite.

A QUALITY-DRIVEN UNIVERSITY

In 2020, the University of Gothenburg is characterised by innovative multidisciplinary research based on strong individual disciplines. All education is research based; as part of their studies, our students are put in contact with active researchers and highly advanced research. The quality of our research and education is strengthened through close contacts with the world around us.

STRONG CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

In 2020, researchers from the University of Gothenburg in various disciplines are contributing to solutions of both regional and global problems. Our programme catalogue is very broad, reflecting not only the needs of students and the surrounding world but also our responsibility for lifelong learning and promoting the general level of knowledge in society. We are engaged in close cooperation with the surrounding society, work for sustainable development and are an active and appreciated provider of knowledge.

GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

In 2020, the research at the University of Gothenburg is characterised by global perspectives and attracts leading researchers from around the world. All programmes offer international outlooks and student exchange opportunities. Attractive highly advanced programmes attract students from all over the world. The University is a prioritised cooperation partner in international initiatives.

INSPIRING WORK ENVIRONMENT

In 2020, the University of Gothenburg is characterised by a stimulating and dynamic work environment where respect for everybody's equal value is completely natural. The University is an attractive employer and the study environment provides optimal work conditions for students. The organisation is characterised by effective information provision and qualified support functions. Being located in the heart of Gothenburg emphasises our presence in society.

AIMS AND STRATEGIES

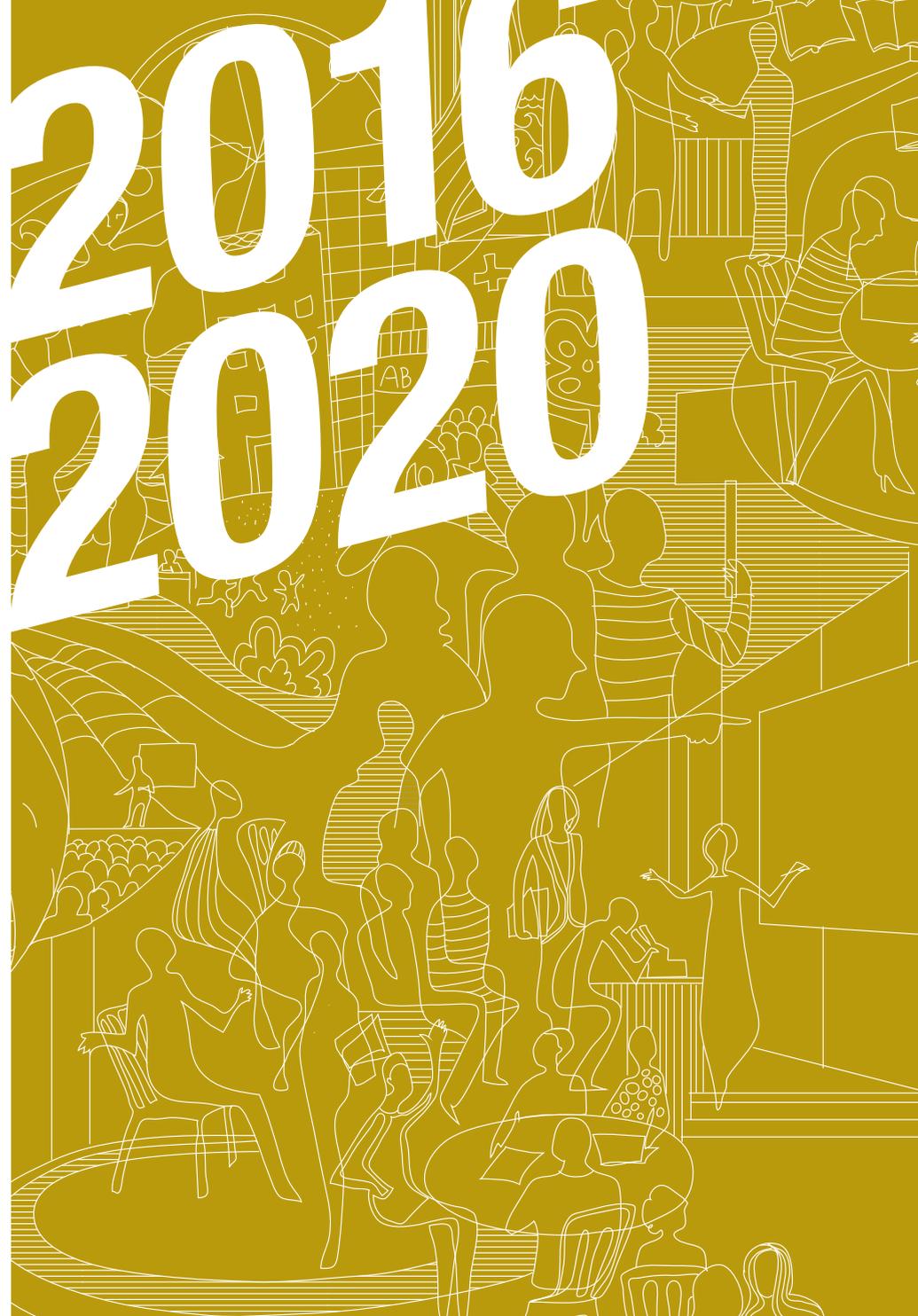
2016–2020

The vision points out the most important issues for the future and aims to stimulate development and the formation of new ideas. It will require thorough and purposeful efforts to become reality. We have therefore formulated aims and strategies that set a concrete direction for the work from here on.

Vision 2020 was the result of an extensive process in which almost 1 000 students and staff members participated in a large number of seminars and workshops. The work was characterised by strong engagement and many people were involved in the choices made. The process also included invited guests from other higher education institutions, nationally and internationally, from the city, the region and business and industry.

Based on an analysis of the current situation and our environment, and on a continuous review of action and operational plans, the previously identified aims and strategies have now been partly revised. For example, the aims and strategies in the area of outreach activities, i.e. cooperation with the surrounding community, have been integrated into the sections on research and education in the revised version of the document.

Our strategies imply that we will work towards research that makes a difference, education that breaks new ground and a work environment that inspires.



STRATEGIES TO REACH THE AIM

ACTIVE RECRUITING LEADS TO HIGH QUALITY

The University of Gothenburg shall strengthen its research and the artistic development work. This is necessary in order to make us more competitive, forms the basis for high quality in our education and furthermore stimulates the exchange with the surrounding society and the rest of the world.

Thus, we shall:

- Focus on external and in particular international recruiting when hiring new staff.
- Actively recruit and support promising young researchers and ensure that they have good working conditions.
- Engage world-leading researchers as visiting researchers.
- Develop the support functions for externally recruited staff.
- In connection with hiring of staff ensure transparent assessment processes guided by meritocratic principles.

BOTH BROAD AND HIGHLY SPECIALISED RESEARCH THAT IS CLOSELY LINKED TO EDUCATION

A basic principle is that the research is independent and allowed to develop based on the criteria set forth by the scientific community. A broad base and a close link to the students form an important prerequisite for further development of our research.

Thus, we shall:

- Create the conditions necessary to develop research of the highest international standard.
- Support research that helps strengthen our education in the first and second cycles.
- Make efforts to reinforce the external research funding, particularly from international sources.

CREATIVE COLLABORATION AND DISSEMINATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

Multidisciplinary research, boundary-crossing collaborations and stimulating outreach activities form a cornerstone of our complete academic environments. It improves our prospects for solving global problems and strengthens the individual disciplines. The University also has a responsibility to make its research available to various groups in society.

Thus, we shall:

- Focus on innovative research in the area between established disciplines.
- Create new meeting places and develop centres of expertise and research as part of the University's profile.
- Create clear incentives for outreach to and collaboration with the surrounding society.
- Work to make outreach activities a useful qualification for teaching staff, researchers and students.
- Strengthen the development of research communication via popular science-oriented outlets.
- Strengthen the University's work to put research findings to practical use in society.
- Work to coordinate and develop innovation support together with external actors.



A WELL-FUNCTIONING INFRASTRUCTURE

An advanced and functional infrastructure is a prerequisite for development of our research. Increased accessibility makes the University more attractive in the competition for staff and students.

Thus, we shall:

- Ensure a qualified infrastructure for research.
- Encourage cooperation with both higher education institutions and other organisations regarding infrastructure issues, both nationally and internationally.
- Emphasise the role of qualified infrastructure as a meeting place in our international collaborations and in our cooperation with the surrounding society.

QUALITY-DRIVEN RESEARCH

The research at the University of Gothenburg shall be of high international quality across the board. This implies that we shall undertake continuous quality development efforts and that the results shall inform practical interventions.

Thus, we shall:

- Design tools for developing research environments of high quality.
- Systematically evaluate our research and strategic research initiatives.



EDUCATION THAT BREAKS NEW GROUND



It is our aim that the University of Gothenburg by 2020 is characterised by a high level of scientific and artistic quality, with pedagogical excellence and an explicit international profile. In parallel to the development of academic programmes, the University shall demonstrate a responsibility for lifelong learning and promotion of knowledge in society through the provision of a wide range of freestanding courses.

STRATEGIES TO REACH THE AIM

PEDAGOGICAL EXCELLENCE

Engaging teaching methods is critical in the meeting with tomorrow's students. Innovative pedagogical ideas are important in order to make us more competitive and able to attract and keep the best students.

Thus, we shall:

- Create a University-wide pedagogic academy with a view to give pedagogical development more weight.
- Give teachers opportunities to further their work on a scientific and artistic basis.
- Assess and acknowledge teaching skills by appointing excellent teachers.
- Stimulate the development of good pedagogical environments.

INTERNATIONAL PROFILE

Our global engagement shall be clearly expressed in the education offered at the University of Gothenburg. This implies that all educational environments shall have an international profile.

Thus, we shall:

- Increase our international exchange activities for students, teachers and administrative staff.
- Stimulate the development of internationally oriented educational environments.
- Develop globally attractive inter-faculty courses and study programmes of high societal relevance.

BOTH BROAD AND SPECIALISED EDUCATION

We know that breadth and specialisation feed off each other and therefore are natural complements. An exciting breadth enables us to attract students from a great range of backgrounds and contribute to life-long learning, and specialised study programmes will help us contribute to filling society's needs for advanced competence.

Thus, we shall:

- Be a university characterised by diversity and high-quality education.
- Offer the students many possible entries to higher education at all levels.
- Develop societally relevant courses and study programmes that extend across faculty boundaries, in particular in the second cycle, in close contact with research.
- Work actively to widen access to and participation in our education and strengthen our contacts with the school system.

BOTH PROGRAMMES AND FREESTANDING COURSES

Study programmes and freestanding courses shall complement each other at the University of Gothenburg. Study programmes often target specific occupations, whereas freestanding courses offer students freedom of choice and opportunities for life-long learning.

Thus, we shall:

- Respond to the requests of students and society at large for clear study paths designed to ensure successful transfer to the labour market.
- Offer a great range of freestanding courses and give particular attention to their importance for lifelong learning.
- Develop models for integration of programme courses and freestanding courses for the purpose of increasing the number of alternative study paths.
- Increase the provision of education delivered in a blended-learning format.

PROMOTION OF KNOWLEDGE AND LIFELONG LEARNING

Our responsibility to promote knowledge in society encompasses expansion and development of knowledge. It also implies an active role with respect to promotion of knowledge in the community, free knowledge development and lifelong learning.

Thus, we shall:

- Actively support a Bildung perspective in our courses and study programmes.
- Emphasise the role of the University with respect to knowledge creation in society and people's opportunities for lifelong learning.
- Offer contract education and opportunities for continuing professional development for various occupational groups.

IMPROVED SHARING OF KNOWLEDGE LEADS TO HIGHER QUALITY EDUCATION

By increasing our contact areas with the external environment, we raise the quality of our education, strengthen the sharing of information and increase our students' opportunities to develop ties with the labour market.

Thus, we shall:

- Utilise alumni to reinforce the connection between the University and the labour market.
- Develop labour market-oriented elements of our courses and study programmes and strive to offer interested students mentors from relevant occupational groups.
- Increase the number of adjunct teaching staff.

THIRD-CYCLE EDUCATION

Third-cycle education is critical not only to our ability to attract tomorrow's most qualified researchers, but also to the University's capacity to contribute advanced competence to society. The education requires carefully planned recruiting as well as qualified student supervision.

Thus, we shall:

- Widen our recruitment efforts and ensure that the processes for admission and supervision are of high quality.
- Work to ensure that our third-cycle education contributes to filling the need for competence in academia and is attractive to the non-academic labour market.
- Increase the recruiting of externally employed doctoral students.
- Develop the internationalisation work and exchange programmes in the third cycle.

QUALITY-DRIVEN EDUCATION

All of our education – both freestanding courses and full study programmes – shall be based on explicit quality criteria. This means that all education shall be evaluated according to the declared criteria on a regular basis, and that the results shall inform appropriate interventions.

Thus, we shall:

- Develop a University-wide quality system that ensures both strong processes and educational outcomes of high quality, with respect to both content and teaching methods.



AN INSPIRING WORK ENVIRONMENT

It is our aim for the University of Gothenburg to by 2020 have become more attractive as a workplace through an optimised organisation, active leadership and strengthened staff and student participation at all levels. Equality in opportunities and working conditions are obvious cornerstones of a good work environment.



STRATEGIES TO REACH THE AIM

A SOCIALLY SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

The attractiveness of the University of Gothenburg as an employer is critical to the quality of its operations. A stimulating work and study environment contributes to our ability to recruit and keep qualified co-workers and students.

Thus, we shall:

- Work actively and systematically with issues pertaining to diversity, equal treatment and gender equality.
- Implement measures to prevent gender-related and other inequalities in structures and work conditions.
- Promote norms that lead to both staff and students treating each other with mutual respect.
- Not tolerate any deviance from basic ethical principles.
- Take active and well-planned measures to ensure well-being among staff and students, including reasonable workloads and intensities for both staff and students.

ACTIVE LEADER- AND COWORKERSHIP

A well-functioning work environment is contingent on active leadership as well as qualified and engaged managers, co-workers and students who are provided opportunities for further development.

Thus, we shall:

- Clarify and develop the leadership at all levels.
- Implement co-worker training for all staff members.
- Strengthen the opportunities for continuous competence development.
- Handle conflicts in an objective and constructive manner.

A LEARNING ORGANISATION

High quality in research and education requires utilisation of the University's total competence. In addition, the global engagement requires that the organisation is internationally oriented.

Thus, we shall:

- Increase the cooperation within the University, between disciplines, between academic and administrative staff and between staff and students.
- Work to eliminate administrative and financial obstacles to cooperation across faculty and department boundaries.
- Work actively to ensure that the University of Gothenburg is an open and accessible higher education institution.

QUALITY-DRIVEN WORK ENVIRONMENT

The work environment at all parts of the University of Gothenburg shall meet very high quality standards. This calls for regular assessments of the work environment and that the results are utilised to inform appropriate interventions.

Thus, we shall:

- Conduct regular work environment assessments focusing on both staff and students as well as implement measures to remedy identified weaknesses.



Research that
makes a **difference**,
education that breaks
new ground and
a work environment
that **inspires**.