



GUIDELINES

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Guidelines for the Systematic Quality Assurance and Enhancement of Education

This governance document has been decided on by the President (registration no. HS-2025-0278). The document enters into force on 1 March 2025.

This governance document regulates the systematic quality assurance and enhancement work (below systematic quality work) of the courses and programmes offered at KTH Royal Institute of Technology in all cycles. This includes course evaluation, course analysis, and programme monitoring. The document describes the components of systematic quality work. It also describes their implementation in general terms and stipulates the frequency with which they are to be implemented. The guidelines are supplemented with templates, which are established by the Faculty Council, and procedures for each school. The Management Office and the Faculty Council are responsible for reviewing and revising the document and answering any questions.

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1 Systematic quality assurance and enhancement work at KTH

KTH shall have a coherent system for the quality assurance work of all courses and programmes. Systematic quality work must be an integrated part of day-to-day operations and support the development of education at KTH.

The documents *Rules of Procedure at KTH* (V-2019-0561) and *Delegation Rules for KTH* (V-2022-0779) regulate overall responsibility for ensuring that the organisation maintains a high level of quality and for quality assurance work. The document *Guidelines for the Organisation of Education* (V-2019-0629) regulates responsibility for the quality assurance and enhancement work of education in all cycles.

Systematic quality work must identify strengths and weaknesses, define areas for improvement and follow up implemented measures and development activities. The quality management system shall contain procedures for addressing and rectifying quality deficiencies. Feedback on the results of follow-ups, reviews and development activities shall be shared with students and staff. Systematic quality work shall thereby promote a culture of quality and strategic work at all levels within KTH. Students and doctoral students shall be involved in this work.

Systematic quality work at KTH encompasses:

- annual follow-ups;
- programme monitoring every other year;
- external peer review;
- targeted evaluations as and when necessary; and
- dialogues and exchanges of experience concerning quality management.

One component of systematic quality work is to regularly review that the quality management system is functioning as intended. A major analysis is performed at the end of each six-year cycle. The thematic areas included in annual follow-ups and programme monitoring are reviewed after each follow-up to ensure that they are still the most relevant areas to the development of the organisation. The processes, procedures and working methods used in annual follow-ups and programme monitoring are developed jointly by University Administration and the faculty after each completed follow-up, in order to ensure that they are effective and appropriate.

2 External regulations

Both the Swedish Higher Education Act (SFS 1992:1434) and Swedish Higher Education Ordinance (SFS 1993:100) contain provisions on quality assurance at higher education institutions. The Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ) is the supervisory authority.

Section 4 of Chapter 1 of the Higher Education Act states:

The operations of higher education institutions shall be arranged to ensure that high standards are attained in courses and study programmes and in research.

The resources available shall be used effectively to sustain a high standard of operation.

Quality assurance procedures are the shared concern of staff and students at higher education institutions.

Section 14 of Chapter 1 of the Higher Education Ordinance states:

The higher education institution must provide students participating in, or who have completed, a course, with the opportunity to present their opinions about the course through a course evaluation organised by the institution.

The higher education institution must compile the course evaluations and provide information about the results, as well as any actions prompted by the course evaluations. The results must be made available to the students. Ordinance (2000:651).

Ordinance (2012:810) with instructions for the Swedish Higher Education Authority includes the assignment to quality-assure the operations of higher education institutions. This is achieved through institutional reviews of the higher education institution's quality assurance processes, evaluations of programmes in the first, second and third-cycles, thematic evaluations, and the appraisal of applications for degree-awarding powers.

The national quality assurance system developed by UKÄ is based on *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG). ESG provides the framework for internal and external quality assurance. KTH complies with the standards and guidelines contained within this framework.

ESG Section 1.9 states:

Standard 1.9: Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned.

3 Annual follow-ups

3.1 Course development in education at all cycles

The director of first and second cycle education and the director of third-cycle education, together with the school faculty board, are responsible for the range of courses and programmes offered and for coordinating work to maintain and enhance their quality, cf. *Guidelines on the Organisation of Education* (V-2019-0629). This responsibility includes ensuring that courses are established and implemented to a high level of quality.

KTH's systematic course development work based on course follow-ups consists of three main parts: course evaluation, course analysis, and remedial work. The aim is to promote pedagogical quality and continuous course development.

At the start of each course instance, the course coordinator shall inform students/doctoral students of the development work conducted since the last course offering.

Students and doctoral students should be offered the opportunity to give their opinions on a course while it is ongoing through, for example, oral feedback, a course evaluation board or other informal channels. The course coordinator should encourage the appointment of representatives to the course evaluation board.

A course evaluation must be conducted at the end of each course instance, giving students and doctoral students the opportunity to give their opinions on the content, arrangement and implementation of the course. The course coordinator shall then perform a course analysis in which they reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the course. The data used in the course analysis should be discussed at a course meeting before the analysis is completed. If a course is in need of specific development measures, an action plan must be established to ensure that these measures are taken.

3.1.1 Course evaluation at the end of the course

The course evaluation conducted at the end of the course provides an opportunity for students and doctoral students to submit their opinions on how intended course learning outcomes can be achieved, the design of learning activities and the relationship between learning activities, intended learning outcomes and assessment. It also gives students and doctoral students the opportunity to reflect on their own efforts and experiences.

Course evaluations are conducted using a questionnaire provided on KTH's learning platform and processed in KTH's automated system for course evaluation and course analysis. Questionnaires are distributed automatically. The questionnaire is available in Swedish and English. Which version is used depends on the course's language of instruction. The course coordinator can add questions. They also send out the questionnaire and receive responses.

3.1.2 Course analysis

The course analysis is the course coordinator's systematic evaluation of the course. Its purpose is to promote the continuous development and quality assurance of the course. If the course is offered as part of a programme, the course analysis also functions as a basis for programme analysis and programme monitoring.

The course analysis shall show the development in the course's quality. It is performed using the template available in KTH's automated system for course evaluation and course analysis. The course analysis is based on the results of the course evaluation conducted at the end of each course and the credits awarded to the students/doctoral students taking the course, as well as other data such as any student feedback on the course while it is ongoing and the opinions of the teachers and examiner involved in the course.

If the course has more than ten participants, the basis for the course analysis should be discussed at a course meeting after the course evaluation has been completed. The course meeting should be attended by the relevant teachers, examiner and student representatives, and its results documented as a part of the course analysis. If the course is a compulsory or conditionally elective course within a programme, the relevant programme directors, student/doctoral student representative and study board president or equivalent should be invited to attend.

The privacy of staff and students/doctoral students must be respected when performing course analyses and no personal data are to be disclosed when quoting from free text responses.

The course analysis must be completed no later than seven weeks (49 days) after the date on which the course ended. The course analysis is then automatically made available on the course page on KTH's learning platform to registered students and anyone else with access to the course room. The course analysis includes the results of the course evaluation conducted at the end of the course, the credits awarded to the students/doctoral students taking the course, documentation of the course meeting and planned changes for the next course offering. The planned changes are also published automatically on the KTH website.

3.1.3 Developing courses through action plans

If a course is in need of specific development measures, an action plan must be established. This need may become apparent in conjunction with a course evaluation, course analysis or another follow-up procedure. An action plan is an in-depth course analysis identifying areas for improvement and formulating planned changes to the course. The action plan is prepared using the template available in KTH's automated system for course evaluation and course analysis.

Course development through an action plan may be initiated by the course coordinator, the examiner, the programme director or head of department for whatever reason, or if the overall assessment of the course by students/doctoral students in the course questionnaire is below a certain benchmark. The benchmark is established by the Faculty Council.

The action plan is prepared by the course coordinator, if necessary with support from the department offering the course. The head of department is responsible for ensuring that an action plan is established and has the support of those involved, regardless of school affiliation. If there are special reasons for doing so, the head of department may halt the preparation of an action plan before it is established.

If the course is a compulsory or conditionally elective course in a programme, it is the responsibility of the programme director to assess whether or not the proposed measures are adequate. For other courses, the responsibility rests with the head of department. The head of department is responsible for ensuring that the measures in the action plan are implemented by staff with adequate resources and authority.

3.2 Following up action plans

Action plans established over the course of the year shall be followed up within the framework of the annual follow-up. The director of first and second cycle education and director of third-cycle education are responsible for following up on whether planned measures have been taken, or if any measures are yet to be implemented, and analysing the quality of the courses the school offers. The quality of the school's courses is documented in a summary report that is used as a basis for the President's operational dialogue. The school faculty board shall be kept informed of the progress of follow-up work and related measures and shall assess the adequacy of remedial work.

3.3 Following up other areas in third-cycle education

In addition to course evaluations and remedial work for courses with specific development needs, the following areas are also included in the annual follow-up of third-cycle education. These other areas of third-cycle education in the annual follow-up are also documented in the summary report as a basis for the President's operational dialogue. The school faculty board shall be kept informed of the progress of follow-up work and related measures and shall assess the adequacy of remedial work.

Supervision

The head of department is responsible for ensuring that the supervision of the department's doctoral students is followed up and that measures are taken whenever deficiencies are identified. Third-cycle programme directors are responsible for following up on whether deficiencies have been rectified in consultation with the head of department. The functions involved in remedial work shall have the necessary authority to take relevant measures.

The study environment

The study environment includes workloads, access to study and career counselling, study support for students with disabilities and adequate infrastructure. It also includes following up to ensure compliance with KTH's core values and the provisions of the Swedish Discrimination Act (SFS 2008:567) on active measures to prevent discrimination and promote equal rights and opportunities.

The head of department is responsible for ensuring that the study environment for the department's doctoral students is followed up and that measures are taken whenever deficiencies are identified. Third-cycle programme directors are responsible for following up on whether deficiencies have been rectified in consultation with the head of department. The functions involved in remedial work shall have the necessary authority to take relevant measures.

Goal attainment and progression

In conjunction with annual follow ups of doctoral students' individual study plans, the director of third-cycle education is responsible for investigating whether the plan includes activities of relevance to achieving the qualitative target of the doctoral programme and that results are being achieved in relation to the time spent. Identified deficiencies are dealt with by the third-cycle programme director together with the doctoral student's principal supervisor and head of department.

In dialogue with the principal supervisor, the programme director follows up whether progression seminars have been held in accordance with the doctoral student's individual study plan (when 30, 50 and 80 per cent of the programme has been completed, for example).

The head of department is responsible for ensuring that measures are taken if problems with goal attainment and progression are identified. The functions involved in remedial work shall have the necessary authority to take relevant measures. The director of third-cycle education shall be informed of any remedial work and check that planned measures have been taken or if any are yet to be implemented.

4 Programme monitoring every other year

Programmes in all cycles are monitored every other year so that there is adequate time to develop the programme between follow-ups. The purpose of programme monitoring is to develop first, second and third-cycle programmes in accordance with KTH's vision and overall goals for education, as well as to ensure that students and doctoral students at KTH have achieved national and local qualitative targets on graduation. Monitoring of first and second cycle programmes and access programmes cover one academic year.

The programme director documents the monitoring in a programme analysis with associated development plan. The development plan details the activities that have been identified as necessary to the further development of the programme in question. Course analyses of courses included in the programme provide important data for the programme analysis. KTH's Doctoral Student Survey, which is conducted every other year, provides important data for doctoral

programme analyses. The programme director is responsible for ensuring that programme monitoring is implemented in accordance with these guidelines and the school's own procedures and processes for obtaining collegial support and collegial development of the analyses. Students and doctoral students shall be invited to participate in the work of programme monitoring. The director of first and second cycle education or director of third-cycle education shall hold a dialogue with the director of the programme in question before a development plan is established. The programme director is responsible for following up the activities in the programme's development plan to ensure they are implemented.

The director of first and second cycle education or director of third-cycle education prepares a joint development plan for the school's programmes in consultation with the faculty board. This joint development plan shall include the activities that are best suited to school-wide implementation. The school-wide development plan is used in the preparation of the school's operational plan. The director of first and second cycle education or director of third-cycle education is responsible for following up to ensure that the activities in the school-wide development plan are implemented.

Based on programme analyses and the school-wide development plan, the director of first and second cycle education or director of third-cycle education is responsible for reporting on the overall quality of the school's programmes and highlighting issues or problems they feel need to be addressed at university-wide level. This report is discussed by the school faculty board, which will comment on the report before it is submitted to the Faculty Council. The school's report is used as a basis for the President's operational dialogue.

The director of first and second cycle education or director of third-cycle education coordinates programme analyses and the school's report to ensure that they are made available according to the agreed timetable.

4.1 All programmes

Reviewing action plans established in the annual follow-up of courses

The programme director reviews any action plans established after the annual follow-up of courses that have been held in their programme in the previous or current academic year. The purpose is to follow up whether the planned measures have been taken and that identified problems have been rectified.

The integration of gender equality, diversity, equal opportunities and sustainable development

The programme director is responsible for ensuring that gender equality, diversity, equal opportunities and sustainable development are integrated into the programme and that related intended learning outcomes are assessed.

Following up metrics for programme quality

The programme director analyses selected quality metrics in areas such as recruitment, admission and student completion.

The strategic development of the programme

The programme director analyses the development of the programme based on KTH's vision, overall goals, selected principles for Future Education at KTH and strategic decisions, as well as collaboration with the surrounding community. The principles for Future Education at KTH

that are followed up should be those deemed most relevant at programme level and that are significant to the quality of the programme.

4.2 First and second cycle programmes and access programmes

Student support, learning resources and infrastructure

The Faculty Council is responsible for following up that systematic work is being conducted to ensure that student support, learning resources and infrastructure are adequate for supporting students' learning.

4.3 First and second cycle programmes

Goal attainment and progression

The programme director is responsible for ensuring that, as a whole, the courses offered in the programme contribute to students achieving all qualitative targets by graduation, and that there is progression between courses when the qualitative target is achieved through multiple courses within the programme.

The relevance of the programme

The programme director analyses the relevance of the programme based on society's needs and societal and technological development. The relevance of the programme shall be included in the external peer review conducted at least once every sixth year, cf. Section 4.5.

4.4 Third-cycle programmes

Supervision and the study environment

The programme director follows up supervision and the study environment and is responsible for ensuring that measures to address any problems are defined.

Goal attainment and progression

The director of third-cycle education performs an annual analysis of goal attainment and progression in order to identify development needs that are not related to individual doctoral students. The director of third-cycle education also follows up to ensure that effective processes and procedures are in place to prepare, follow up and revise individual study plans.

The quality and relevance of doctoral theses

The director of third-cycle education is responsible for ensuring that the quality and relevance of the doctoral theses produced at the school are analyzed.

4.5 External peer review

All programmes must be subjected to external peer review by one or more external experts at least once every sixth year. The purpose of external reviews is to obtain fresh perspectives on the programme as a basis for further developing the programme.

External peer review is part of the programme monitoring during the year in question. External peer reviews are mainly based on reports produced within programme monitoring. Students and doctoral students shall have the opportunity to be represented in the peer review.

The school faculty board decides when and how this process is to be implemented.

5 Targeted evaluations as and when necessary

Targeted evaluations are university-wide and may cover a certain area, a group of programmes or an education cycle. Targeted evaluations are a complement to annual follow-ups and programme monitoring and should be employed restrictively. Themes for targeted evaluations can be proposed by an individual function or group within KTH. The decision on whether to conduct a targeted evaluation rests with the Faculty Council.

A targeted evaluation is initiated when a specific need has been identified. This may be because an area is considered to be strategically important and in-depth knowledge is required in order to decide on its future development. Targeted evaluations may also be initiated if more information is needed about an area, or if a quality deficit that affects KTH as a whole has been discovered through annual follow-ups or programme monitoring that are part of KTH's quality management system.

The methods and processes used in targeted evaluations are adapted to the question(s) that need to be answered by the evaluation. If necessary, a targeted evaluation may involve external experts. When deciding to conduct a targeted evaluation, decisions will also be made on which methods to use and whether external experts should be involved.

Targeted evaluations are coordinated by University Administration's Management Office.

6 Dialogues and exchanges of experience concerning quality work

Dialogue at school level

Dialogue concerning the results of annual follow-ups and programme monitoring is conducted within the faculty board of each school. The head of school is responsible for ensuring that this dialogue is conducted. School-wide issues that need to be addressed in the school's operational plan are identified and issues that need to be dealt with after the dialogues are documented. The dialogue is conducted in accordance with each school's procedures. Students and doctoral students shall have the opportunity to be represented in these dialogues.

The President's operational dialogues

Dialogue concerning overarching quality issues is integrated into the President's operational dialogues as part of the operational planning process. The basis for the part of the dialogue that relates to quality issues is the report produced by each school. Issues that are to be dealt with after the dialogue are documented, including the responsible function.

University-wide exchanges of experience

University-wide exchanges of experience and learning are part of systematic quality work at KTH. The arenas for this are the so called Storträffen Meetups and the collegial working groups for prioritised education issues (PriU groups). The Faculty Council is responsible for ensuring that Storträffen Meetups are held and that the outcome of the latest round of programme monitoring is on the agenda.