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Reforming Research Assessment – An institutional perspective

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European Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment

In Norway:

- 20 institutions have signed ARA

- University collaboration to develop national guidelines: NOR-CAM (Norwegian Career Assessment Matrix)

- University of Oslo – new set of guidelines and regulations in place

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NOR-CAM: Based on six principles

- Measure quality and excellence by balancing quantitative and qualitative dimensions
    - Bibliometric indicators should be used with caution

- Recognise several competencies as a foundation for merit
    - The individual academic is not expected to excel in all areas.

- Assess all results, activities and competencies in the light of Open Science principles
    - Openness should be seen as an integrated part of the academic activity

- Practice transparency in the assessment/visibility of merit
    - Individuals must know the criteria used to assess and provided insight into their application

- Promote gender balance and diversity – awareness of how criteria works

- Assist in the concrete practice of job vacancy announcements and assessment processes locally

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NOR-CAM: Key recommendations

- To establish a comprehensive framework for the assessment of academic careers that:
  - enables diverse career paths and promotes high standards in the three key areas: education, research and interaction with society
  - recognises the independent and individual competencies of academic staff as well as their achievements in groups and through collaboration
  - values and encourages academic leadership and management

- To engage internationally in developing a Norwegian assessment model as:
  - changes in the assessment criteria cannot be made by one country alone
  - a Norwegian model can (hopefully) contribute to related processes internationally

- NOR-CAM should be a practical and flexible tool for assessing academic results, competence and experience for academic personnel

- Working towards an 'automagic CV system' that simplify documentation

NOR-CAM: Division of labour nationally

The guide is flexible but offers a systematic and structured framework for assessment. The assessment can be adapted to emphasise different competencies for different tasks/ positions/career stages depending on both the individual's career and the institutional needs.

nor-cam_short_english.pdf (uhr.no)

The institutions
- NOR-CAM should be incorporated into the institution's career and HR policy. Implications include updates of guidelines for the announcement of academic positions, and follow up of scientific assessment committees wrt their assessment practice

Academic staff
- Use NOR-CAM to document achievements and competencies with components from the entire range of academic activities

Funders
- Use NOR-CAM as a basis for assessing applicants and project participants' competencies when assessing research projects

Ministry of Education and Research:
- Incorporate the principles of NOR-CAM into the new national framework for the evaluation of Norwegian research and higher education – implications for the Research Council of Norway, and for the Directorate for ICT ('automagic CV system')

UiO-CAM – elements in the implementation process

- The competence assessment matrix UiO-CAM is used as a framework for all scientific positions at UiO and for the evaluation of candidates for these positions.

- UiO-CAM is used as the basis for developing competence requirements for promotion from associate professor to professor. This work is coordinated with national committees in the relevant fields.

- UiO-CAM is coordinated with the work carried out by other groups/initiatives at UiO (especially in the field of educational expertise).

- New, common instructions for job announcements, sorting committees, expert committees, interview committees, and recommendation bodies are developed.

- Process descriptions of roles, division of work, and collaboration between different committees in the appointment processes are developed.

- The mandate of expert committees is expanded to include a comprehensive assessment of various aspects of academic work. The number of experts and their expertise should be reviewed.

- A description of how competence can be documented, preferably with examples from different fields, should be developed.

- New guidelines should be followed up through communication measures targeting various target groups. The development of CV templates and descriptions/examples of research careers should be available for employees

The five-dimensional matrix for assessment of competence

Competence area	Results/competence	Documentation	Reflection
Acacemic qualifications (research results and research prosess)	•Publications •Management of/ participation in research projects or research groups •External funding •Open publication •Contributions to making publications available •Datasets, software •Sharing research tools and methods •Specialist textbooks •Research reports •Contributions to innovation based on research and academic development word •Appraisal work for appointments, promotions, doctorates •Peer reviews •Academic presentations •Interdisciplinarity	•Publications submitted •Inventions, patents, software, models etc. •Christin registrations •Certificates, confirmation of participation •Diplomas •Letter of allocation •Prices, other rewards	•Quality and relevance of results •Own role in research and research cooperation •Contributions to open research •Own development over time •Contributions to interdisiplinary cooperation
Educational qualifications	•Teaching •Planning, assessment and development of teaching programmes •Teacher training •Examination and assessment work •Research supervision at various levels •Educational leadership, development/renewal of study programmes/courses •Active use of digital competence in teaching and assessment •Innovative use of digital learning environments and learning resources •Preparation of new forms of teaching, learning and assessment •Preparation of textbooks, digital learning materials and other learning resources •Participation in the analysis and evaluation of education and quality of education •Collegial cooperation linked with work on education quality •Mentoring	•Educational portfolio •Diplomas, course certificates •Testimonial •Examples of syllabi, course descriptions, examination question papers •Examples of the use of student evaluation •Reports •Appointments •Textbooks •Collection of tasks •Link to online resources (MMOCs etc) developed by the applicant •Videos •Prices of other rewards	•*Focus on student learning* •How learning processes are linked to own practice •Links between teaching design and learning •Use of student evaluations •*Clear development over time* •What principles, reflections and experiences have been key to own development •Reasons for choosing own teaching practice •*A researching approach* •How teaching/study programmes work •Why it works like that •How to use research-based knowledge to create better learning opportunities •*A collegial attitude and practice* •Own contribution to a broader academic environment •Making use of colleagues' experience •Own role in formal and informal processes in the field of education
Applied knowledge	•Relevant education/courses •*Dissemination activities* •Communication to the general public or specific user groups •Lectures/courses •Participation in public debate •Popular science dissemination •Exhibitions •Translations •*Innovation* •Commercial use •Patents •Licences •New services •Practice development in trade and industry, the public sector or organisations •*Interaction with the community* •Work on public enquiries •Academic contributions in the voluntary sector •Contribution to community development	•Diplomas/certificates •Academic publications •Reports •Catalogues •Databases •Patents •Models •Examples of/links to participation in public debate •Examples of/links to online resources documenting contributions in the voluntary sector •Examples of/links to online resources documenting contributions in practice development or development of new services	•Quality and relevance of results •Interaction between research and the use of knowledge in practice •Own development over time •Contributions to interdisciplinary cooperation •Own practice in the light of knowledge in the field •What principles, reflections, and experiences that have been key to own development •Reasons for choosing own dissemination practice
Qualifications in academic management and administration	•Research management •Education Management •Management of research projects/networks •Management appointments in academia •Committee work •Participation on boards and councils •Other relevant experience/training for management/administration	•Certificates and diplomas •Testimonials •CVs •References to websites documenting experience	•Own contribution in formal and informal leadership roles •Own practice in the light of knowledge in the field •Own development over time •What the applicant has wanted to achieve, how they have attempted to achieve this •Management as a contribution to attainment of results •How to prepare for future management duties •Contributions to strategy work •How experiences in the field of management and administration are helping to reinforce skills in the other qualification areas
Personal qualifications	•Personal qualities are specified in the call for applications •How personal qualities have helped to bring about specific results of relevance to the position	•Interviews •Reference interviews •Testimonials	•A collegial attitude and practice •Own role in research and education cooperation •Contributions to the working environment •How personal qualities are helping to reinforce skills in the other qualification areas

Main Challenges and Drivers for Reforming Research Assessment

Positive drivers:
- Agreement that NOR-CAM/UiO-CAM can simplify recruitment and make it more transparent
- CV templates, research career descriptions, and examples will be shared on the university's website to facilitate understanding and compliance.
- Preliminary feedback indicates that the new provisions have resulted in clearer assessment criteria and procedures – for example the development of the assessment matrix

Challenges:
- The new procedure challenge existing norms and traditions in some fields
- External review committees are not always easy to «guide»…
- To be a «frontrunner» in implementing the new framework has some advantages and some risks attached

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