



Department of Social and Psychological Studies

SELF-EVALUATION

Periodic Research Review

0. SUMMARY

The Department of Social and Psychological Studies (ISP) is composed of subjects sharing interests in theories and practices relating to human beings in a wide perspective, spanning the individual, organisational, and social levels through the academic subjects of gender studies, psychology, social work, and sociology.

At present, there are 90 members of staff involved in education and research at ISP. In 2020, 44 full-time equivalents of the employment rate were state funded while the rest was externally funded through, for instance, research centres. A little over 70% of staff have a doctorate and there are around 25 doctoral students admitted to one of the third-cycle programmes offered in psychology, social work, or sociology at ISP. During the period 2018–2020, as many as 213 publications were produced of which 180 were peer-reviewed works. External national and international cooperation at ISP is considerable, as reflected in the great number of publications.

In line with the strategic goals of Karlstad University, a great deal of departmental research is pursued at several centres, and to strengthen disciplinary transparency, interdisciplinary cooperation activities take place in research. Measures taken to enable interdisciplinary research include collegial invitations to open seminars, regular meetings of the department's professorial council, and collaboration on joint research applications. Continuous efforts to assure high level research expertise at ISP can take many forms but are mainly done through professional development of existing academic staff and recruitment new staff.

At Karlstad University considerable resources are allocated to provide consistent and professional support to various parts of the research process, administration, dissemination of research results, and facilitating the link between research and teaching.

1. LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

Karlstad University is working towards Vision 2030, which in terms of research means that our research must be of high quality and contribute new knowledge. Research profiles should be clear and well-known, basic research central, and a strong tradition of participating in centre activities with multidisciplinary and needs-driven research is expected. Our degree programmes should be vitalised through teachers actively engaged in current research. Doctoral programmes are required to be comprehensive and integrated in our research environments. Vision 2030 is broken down into strategic objectives 2019–2023, and in section 4.2 in this review, the Department of Social and Psychological Studies (ISP) describes its relation to the research objectives.

Based on the multidisciplinary perspectives emphasised in Vision 2030, ISP has an overarching long-term objective, which is to take advantage of the departmental composition of subjects that can contribute different expertise to the study of the individual, organisation, and society. In a research perspective, collaboration is an important step towards continued success in Centre activities related to ISP and for joint research applications for all four subjects, also beyond the Centres.

We also have the objectives to increase the number of interdisciplinary seminars in the department, working towards the approval of gender studies as a doctoral study subject, and to continue increasing the number of readers at the department. In addition, we plan to continue enhancing equal and sustainable research, particularly regarding the sustainability aspects which need to be highlighted and problematised even more in the future.

2. ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

2.1 DEPARTMENTAL ORGANISATION AND RESEARCH LEADERSHIP

The Head of Department is appointed by the Dean for four years. The Head has the overriding responsibility for research, education, and cooperation at the department, and also for the work environment, staff and budget. The department also has a Deputy Head, who can stand in for the Head of Department and who shares the same appointment period. The head and deputy head have administrative support. Each subject in the department has a director of study, appointed by the Head for three-year periods. The director of study is responsible for allocation of duties at the level of the subject. At present, gender studies and sociology share the same director of study. The departmental management team consists of the head, deputy head, support for the head, and all directors of study, and meet regularly at least once a week. If called for, the department's financial officer also attend the meetings, at which issues connected to the management of research are handled.

The head appoints a head of subject for each subject for a three-year period. Normally, head of subject should have a doctorate in the subject concerned, but in most cases the appointee is at least a reader or professor. The head of subject is in charge of research and has an overriding responsibility for the development of courses and programmes offered, research and cooperation, quality assurance, strategic plans, subject specific evaluations, and committee reports on issues of education and research. In the third-cycle subjects social work and sociology, the heads of subjects are responsible for issues concerning doctoral programmes. The subject psychology has a specific director of study for doctoral programmes because of the number of doctoral students (around 15). Gender studies is not a third-cycle subject at ISP. Two to three times a semester, heads of subject, directors of studies, doctoral student representatives, student representatives, head of department, deputy head, financial officer, and the programme directors for first and second cycles studies participate in a departmental council. The council has an advisory function to the head of department, but also functions as a forum for exchanging ideas concerning education and research.

Apart from the management team and the departmental council, each subject has monthly collegial meetings and programme committee meetings linked to each degree programme. Subjects offering third-circle programmes arrange regular meetings for the collegial body of supervisors (social work and sociology) or meetings of the doctoral programme committee (psychology). Regular meetings on research in respective subjects are also arranged.

2.2 DEPARTMENTAL EFFORTS TO ENHANCE THE RESEARCH CULTURE

The distinctive strategy for ISP, as for Karlstad University generally, to promote our research culture and ensure a high degree of disciplinary transparency and internationalisation, is to organise research activities in centres of expertise. The centres are financially independent units, usually funded by external resources. No researcher, however, is employed by a centre, but all are employees of a department linked to a centre. Pursuing research at a centre, where the expertise of various disciplines contributes to move important research issues forward, is one of the keys needed for a relatively new university, like Karlstad, to compete with the more established universities.

ISP has a connection to five centres:

- Centre for research on the mental health and life circumstances of children and youth (CBU), <https://www.kau.se/cbu>
- Centre for research on sustainable societal transformation (CRS), <https://www.kau.se/crs>
- Centre for gender studies(CGF), <https://www.kau.se/centrum-genusforskning>
- Service Research Center (CTF), <https://www.kau.se/ctf>
- FOU Welfare Värmland (FOU VV), <https://www.kau.se/fou-valfard-varmland>

Many researchers at ISP perform a great or most part of their duties in connection with activities or projects run by one or several centres. In this review, the centres are not in focus as they are reviewed separately. To provide an accurate picture of ISP research, it is crucial to clarify that the research carried out at the centres by researchers at ISP is generally affiliated to ISP, which is not completely reflected in the background data as these were collected through ISP accounts strictly and not centre accounts. A full picture of ISP research would have required a simultaneous evaluation of five centres of expertise.

However, all researchers at ISP are not members of a centre. Beyond the centres, the ISP department makes efforts in various ways to maintain and strengthen the research culture. For some years, we have had a joint professorial college for all professors at ISP. The exchange of experiences and contacts taking place there contributes to disciplinary transparency as well as providing more opportunities to joint networks and increased internationalisation.

An example of disciplinary transparency is the work done on joint research applications at ISP. The applications are developed in the area of a departmental joint research project on Sustainable ageing, headed by one of our readers in conjunction with the professorial college. The objective is to apply for research funding for one or several departmental projects in 2022.

A further important element in good research culture is the many seminars arranged annually in and out of the centres, which may involve external visiting researchers presenting their research, application seminars, work-in-progress seminars, and seminar series on specific themes. The department's seminars have been announced to all staff via e-mail, for some years, to increase opportunities for interdisciplinary meetings, which also applies to doctoral student seminars such as mid-way review seminars and public defence events.

2.3 DEPARTMENTAL EFFORTS TO IMPROVE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

A constant ambition of the management team is to develop transparent and predictable principles for how the department allocates resources in the hope that this will improve research opportunities. Since 2020, allocation of duties in the department is based on the same principles for all the four subjects. The allocation principles are reviewed and updated before each new semester if needed, and are available to staff in the document, "Principles for allocation of duties and resources". A major part of the document concerns allocation of duties relating to undergraduate studies funding, but also the allocation of research funding is described. The document is based on the local working time agreement and aims to maintain an equal, fair and sustainable allocation of resources among department staff.

To ensure time for research, professional development for senior lecturers well as lecturers is planned for 20 per cent of real working time. Professional development may involve pursuing research and development, doctoral level studies, keeping abreast with development and research in the area of the teaching appointment, training for supervision, undergoing training for teaching and learning in higher education, and to take part of on-going development and research in the area of higher education pedagogy. Senior lecturers promoted to readers also have 10 per cent of full-time employment for research in addition to the professional development time. This additional research time is expected to be spent on doing research, collaborating on research, or applying for external funding of research. According to the working time agreement, professors – provided that it is in line with the university's circumstances and needs – should devote most of their working time to research and teaching at doctoral level. A professor and a reader shall normally engage in applying for external research funding, cooperation, and participate in development and management work in the subject. A principle at the University is also that all researchers should teach for 20 per cent of their employment over time. In addition to this research frame, there are opportunities for researchers to apply for application funding annually. This funding covers extra time (one month) for working on an application for external funding. Over the years, a great number of such funding has been granted to researchers at ISP. In recent years, the faculty office has also granted applications for support to senior lecturers to qualify for appointment as readers. Several members of staff at ISP have received such support (ca 20% for nine months). This is in line with the department's ambition to increase the number of readers.

Providing good conditions for research does not only involve time allocated but also the existence of relevant support structures for research in the organisation. At Karlstad University, there is a well-developed system for support of researchers during various parts of the process. Here are some examples: Regarding research ethics, the local research ethics committee reviews projects and provides advisory comments. Further, university financial officers have efficient routines for supporting researchers in applying for external funding. Additional examples worth mentioning are the university library, where there are supportive librarians specialised in various subject areas, and the university publishing company, Karlstad University Press, providing support to research staff in publishing reports, doctoral theses, and books, in close cooperation with the university printing office, which is also helpful when it comes to graphic layout of figures and book covers. Lastly, we can mention the communications office, where ISP has an officer especially supporting our researchers in disseminating results in a social context.

3. EXPERTISE PROFILE

The ISP department has a staff of 90 members, which Table 1.1 on background data does not make clear, as it only shows fulltime equivalents. The distribution of the categories of lecturer, senior lecturers, and professors is fairly stable over the review period and based on fulltime equivalents (HTE). Most staff are women and also distributed across the categories of doctoral students, lecturers, senior lecturers and professors, women dominate in all categories. The skewed gender distribution is considered as far as possible in connection with recruitment.

3.1 DEPARTMENTAL EFFORTS TO ENSURE RESEARCH EXPERTISE AND STAFF

At ISP continuous efforts are made to ensure expertise in teaching and research in all four subjects. A recruitment plan is annually updated and approved in which a five-year perspective on recruitment is analysed and described. The plan takes into account the existence of any expertise gaps or the risk of gaps and age structures as well as the expertise and gender distribution among staff in each subject. The recruitment plan includes concrete suggestions for activities in the coming year and the plan is presented to the faculty.

The recruitment plan indicates two ways of ensuring research expertise among academic staff: through professional development of existing staff and through recruitment of new staff with the required research skills and expertise.

Research expertise among our post PhD researcher is primarily ensured through their own research activities and participation in the national and international research community. Capacity to renewal lies in encouraging our researchers to seek new collaborations in the department or with other departments, to participate in international conferences, to accept invitations to serve as reviewer nationally and internationally, and to engage in the doctoral student programmes. Heads of subject also support post PhD researchers' promotion to readers. Ensuring expertise through existing staff may also involve encouraging non-PhD lecturers to study towards a doctorate, which some of the department's lecturers are doing. There is continued need of this in the subjects of social work and psychology.

Recruiting new research qualified staff is also an important step in the strategy to ensure highly qualified research staff in all areas. To attract skilled researchers to ISP, it is important to assure sound recruitment processes, which Karlstad University has a reputation for doing as the HR Office at Karlstad University received the honour of HR Excellence in Research 2020, for, among other things, a fair and transparent recruitment process and advantageous professional development of researchers. Successful recruitment also requires attractive positions. Since long, we have had extensive collaboration with Region Värmland (RV) regarding creating attractive positions, which over the years, has resulted in cooperation on employments of professors, clinical lecturers, and doctoral students. Other aspects highlighted as attractive reasons for seeking employment at Karlstad University are its medium-size, proximity to cross-disciplinary collaboration, campus in one location, accommodating staff, and beautiful surroundings with natural value. Nevertheless, recruitment is a challenge for us as certain positions are difficult to fill with qualified applicants.

3.2 ACADEMIC COLLABORATIONS, NETWORKS, AND ENGAGEMENTS

ISP researchers have extensive cooperation and collaboration with national as well as international networks of researchers, institutions, and organisations. Even if many of these partnerships and contacts are formalised and have been in operation for many years, this information may be missing in the university's databases. In addition, to the formalised activities, there is a great number of non-formalised cooperation and engagements, often constituting an important basis for generating new ideas and new approaches to research applications or publications. Some examples of the vast numbers of networks, engagements, and partners among researchers at ISP are provided below.

The gender studies section at ISP has close collaboration with the Centre for Gender Research (CGF), which is part of a number of national and international networks, of which the engagements in GEXcel (International Collegium for Advanced Transdisciplinary Gender Studies <http://www.gexcel.org>), RINGS (The International Research Association of Institutions of Advanced Gender Studies) and the graduate school InterGender are most important and part of CGF's institutional platforms.

Examples of engagement by researchers in psychology are editorial board membership for research journals, assignments as evaluator/reviewer in national research councils, as reviewer in international research councils

(e.g., Canada, Poland, EU), and members of the Swedish National Committee for Psychological Sciences. Our psychology researchers are also active as experts in branch-related research organisations nationally (e.g., Länsförsäkringar Alliance Research Fund, BFUF – Research and Development Fund of the Tourism Industry), as well as internationally (e.g., UITP - International Association of Public Transport).

Researchers in social work participate in national research centres and national and international research networks, for example, Centre for Evidence Based Psychosocial Intervention (CEPI) and the research network for Knowledge Implementation and Patient Safety (KIPS), Nordic Network for Research on Homelessness, and FORSA Network on Power and User involvement. Several social work researchers are closely affiliated with FOU Welfare Värmland (FOU VV) which has a wide net of contacts in the Värmland region and nationally. Research is initiated at FOU VV and disseminated via the FOU VV's networks.

Researchers in sociology are regularly members of networks and cooperation projects with other universities, nationally and internationally. An example is a collaboration on death sociology, which, for instance, generated the network Queer Death Studies. In the research field of Personal life, Emotions and Everyday Organising (PLEEO), collaboration and networking take place in the areas of researching home, migration, and cultural identity through Home-Migration Nexus/HOMing (<https://homing.soc.unitn.it/>) and IMISCOE (<https://www.imiscoe.org/>), as well as with Morgan Centre for Research into Everyday Lives, the University of Manchester.

4. RESEARCH DOMAINS AND RESULTS

This section describes research at ISP and results on a general level. Some of our current projects are also described and the research production in relation to the university's strategy and profile is commented.

4.1 RESEARCH SUBJECTS IN ISP

At ISP, research is pursued in the subjects of gender studies, psychology, social work, and sociology. Many members are active in Centres at Karlstad University and their projects are therefore account-coded at the respective centre instead of the department. Consequently, these projects are not displayed in the statistics and background data attached to this review. Pursuing research at the centres has an added value to the subjects as cooperation with external organisations and interdisciplinary cooperation in academia is facilitated. This creates better opportunities to address current social challenges.

4.1.1 Gender Studies

Research in gender studies (GV) is organised in close collaboration with the Centre for Gender Research (CGF). Research is pursued in three main areas: **Masculinity Studies; Transgender Studies; Gender, Health, and Technology; Action for Organisational Change**. Profile areas are variable in relation to current issues in gender studies and theory. Research in the areas of Masculinity Studies and Transgender Studies is unique in an international perspective and here CGF is a central actor national and internationally.

The Centre has few members but a great number of research projects, which are all in collaboration with other researchers at Karlstad and other universities, as well as the region and companies when the principal authority and project leadership are placed with CGF. The range of projects is wide, but they all relate to the research platform at CGF. There are international and transnational projects as well as local projects focusing on Värmland. Range also applies to funding, which is provided by Region Värmland as well as EU research programmes.

4.1.2 Psychology

Research in psychology has two main strands: focus on clinical research and focus on everyday psychology. A considerable part of this research in the subject takes place at the Service Research Center (CTF) and in the newly established Centre for research on the mental health and life circumstances of children and youth (CBU). In the field of **clinical research**, which includes a broad spectrum of areas, there are studies on relaxation, sleep and stress, fatigue syndromes, validating communication, psychosis, cognitive control among individuals with chronic pain, memory training and dance for Parkinson's, transdiagnostic psychological treatment, internet drugs, intervention for children exposed to domestic violence, etc. The last area is also a designated area for other subjects at the department. Research often takes place in close conjunction with authorities, health care

and research groups at other universities.

In the field of **everyday psychology** the focus is on everyday behaviour and psychological mechanisms, such as processes arising in the individual's role as citizen, consumer, patient, employee, or how organisations and companies interact with individuals. The starting points of most projects are current social challenges such as social and environmental sustainability and health promoting behaviour. Some examples of research topics are motivation and sustainable change, daily commuting and well-being, text-coaching in health promotion, user-driven innovation in health care, the use and effects of health status data, and IT in schools. In the field of everyday psychology, research takes place in close cooperation with companies, branch organisations and health care, locally in Värmland and internationally.

4.1.3. Social work

Research in social work has three main strands: Critical welfare studies, studies on health and social vulnerability at individual and group levels, and applied welfare studies. Several social work researchers have close cooperation with the FoU Välfärd Värmland Centre, which has a wide net of contacts in the region of Värmland and nationally.

Critical welfare studies are based on constructivism and concern individual, positional and structural factors. Welfare is understood in a broad sense encompassing social welfare services and the social insurance system as well as the importance of economy, labour market and housing market.

In the field of **Studies on health and social vulnerability at individual and group levels**, research is pursued on the life circumstances of children and youth, domestic violence and honour-related violence, abuse and comorbidity, and the situation of the elderly. Certain profession-related studies are also included.

In the field of **Applied welfare studies**, practice-related studies are carried out with the purpose of contributing to knowledge-based social and psychosocial work in the social services, health care and education. Research is based on the needs of the professional field and the receivers and expected to benefit current practice.

Researchers in social work collaborate with other subjects in the Forum for studies on violence and prevention of violence, a multi-disciplinary research group with representatives of sociology, gender studies, public health studies, jurisprudence, and nursing. The aim is to increase knowledge of violence and preventive measures from a multi-disciplinary through cooperation within academia and with the community at large, educate and in other ways disseminate knowledge and participate in the public debate on violence and exposure to violence.

Research in social work is characterised by proximity to the professional field and other interested parties. This applies to projects of a more basic research nature and projects defined as applied research of benefit to municipalities and regions.

4.1.4. Sociology

Research in sociology is aligned with theories of critical sociology and research can be summed up in three overlapping research areas:

The area **Power, resistance and organising** studies individual and collective resistance practices with a focus on constructive resistance and daily resistance. The group addresses themes such as humour in political activism, worker cooperatives, and #MeToo. Among other things, the group's research has resulted in a special issue of the journal Sociological research on the theme: "Time, power and resistance", in which we find, for instance, articles analysing resistance and power in relation to the temporality and time control of digital media and capitalism. A thesis project investigates worker cooperatives in Sweden organising for social change by constructive resistance to capitalism. The thesis highlights the difficulties associated with practising resistance in contexts defined by the power challenged.

The area **Personal life, emotions, and everyday organising (PLEEO)** applies theories and research in emotion sociology to everyday life and the personal. Several subjects are addressed in this research, such as death, migration, sperm donation and singlehood. The death sociology research is worth attention, for example the analyses of post-mortem social death and the bereaved persons' continuing bonds to the dead. Further, migration from Russia and the eastern states and belonging is studied in a novel way through the meanings of object, food, home, and identity, among other things, in terms of the concept of diasporic objects. The interdisciplinary (sociology and gender studies) project Transnational singles, having coined the concept of the 'transnational bachelor', is also important. The concept refers to single men that relate to several national contexts because they have migrated. The project fills an international research gap on migrant single men.

The area **Age sociology** focuses on age as a ground for the distribution of opportunities, rights and obligations in society, and intersectional perspectives on age. Studies centre on age and power (ageism), senior entrepreneurship and senior dance. The project Dance late in life is especially noteworthy, contributing to research on the elderly nationally and internationally through knowledge of the meanings of dance and its significance to the elderly in terms of social, bodily, and emotional dimensions.

Altogether, these research areas contribute to the international research front in sociology through theory development and the expansion of empirical material with Sweden and Swedish situations.

4.2 ISP RESEARCH IN RELATION TO THE UNIVERSITY'S STRATEGY AND PROFILE

Karlstad University has for 2019–2023 set up six strategic objectives for education and research which we work towards and which in various ways relate to our research. The objectives involve a stronger link between research and teaching, research activities characterised by a close relation to external actors, higher degree of internationalised activities, systematic efforts towards social, economic, and environmental sustainable societal development, and increase of the university's third-cycle programmes in quality and scope.

The link between teaching and research is strengthened through our researchers' frequent teaching at all university levels. A university object is that researchers should teach for at least 20 per cent of full-time employment. Staff with significantly less research time are encouraged to spend time on research applications funded by internal investments.

Close relations with external actors are realities for all departmental researchers via their own networks as well via networks connected to the Centres where a great deal of the research is done. Because of the four subjects' areas of interests, it follows that several practice-related links to society exist, and authorities, companies, branch organisations, municipalities and regions are often clients as well as recipients in relation to the research carried out.

Most researchers at ISP have their own national and international networks in the areas of their research interests. Researchers are encouraged to cooperate with each other and with researchers at other universities and countries. Until the pandemic, the department has contributed to the funding of international conference participation for researchers wishing to present results. New strategies may be needed to find more sustainable ways of increasing internationalisation.

Regarding systematic efforts towards social, economic, and environmentally sustainable societal development, there are clear links in research in all the four subjects. This applies, for example, to CGF projects, and gender studies contribute to equality and diversity and several members are engaged in the university's gender mainstreaming efforts. In psychology, research is ongoing on social and environmental sustainability, for example, on motivation and sustainable change. In social work, there are several links to social sustainability in various ongoing projects. A case in point is the research on violence and its prevention. In sociology, practically all research is related to social sustainability from various perspectives, for instance, studies on migration, singlehood, relations, resistance to various forms of repression and intersectional perspectives on ageing.

Regarding the objective of increasing the quality and scope of third-cycle programmes, it is important to mention that gender studies is not yet a third-cycle subject area at Karlstad University, but the ambition to achieve this is a long-term goal. Otherwise, the number of doctoral studentships has been stable during the review period, but in the current year, there is recruitment in process, which will increase the number at ISP. Third-cycle programmes are continuously objects of quality assurance.

4.3 COMMENTS ON RESEARCH OUTPUT AND ITS IMPACT

To strengthen the impact of research published in peer-reviewed journals, it is a pronounced ambition to ensure that publishing should preferably be in well established and well indexed high quality research journals. This is also encouraged as the yearly bibliometric compilation made at Karlstad University only includes publications in journals indexed in Web of Science or included in the Norwegian register for scientific journals, series and publishers.

Publishing in open-access is also encouraged to further enhancing the impact of research. There is financial support for this from the university via the library and directly from the department. As can be seen in the background data, we have progressed quite far regarding open access (62 per cent) publishing. The number of co-authored publications with international researchers is also relatively high (36 per cent) and reflects how researchers at the department pursue research.

Research can also have an effect in other ways. Regarding Masculinity Studies, for example, CGF publishes one of the two world leading journals in the area: *Norma – International Journal for Masculinity Studies*. A journal is beneficial to the university as it contributes to creating networks and attracting important research expertise to the centre and the subject.

The research in the department's four subjects is conducted in several fields and traditions, which makes it difficult to encapsulate the research production and its impact. As Table 5.1 shows regarding the department's publications in 2018-2020, the number of published works of different kinds is 213, of which the majority has undergone a peer-review process.

Part of the self-review involves selecting 10 peer-reviewed publications to provide an idea of the research taking place (Section 7). In our selection we have chosen to project the image of a department with a great scope in research. Publications were therefore chosen based on the following criteria: scientific/scholarly contribution, content quality, displays and citations. In proportion to the number of employed researchers at the four subjects, two publications were selected from three subjects and four from the subject of psychology.

5. COLLABORATION AND INTERACTION WITH THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY

5.1 EFFORTS TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOP RESEARCH ACTIVITIES THROUGH EXTERNAL COLLABORATION

Efforts to enhance and develop research collaboration between ISP and external partners are ongoing at several levels concurrently, from the level of the university to the individual researcher.

At Karlstad University, the Grants and Innovation Office (GIO) is a central unit for supporting researchers in all matters from creating networks with external partners to utilising and commercialising research results. GIO works closely with department managements as well as with research groups and researchers. The contact between GIO and ISP researchers is maintained through newsletters and GIO's participation at joint department meetings to train and inform researchers on collaboration issues. <https://www.kau.se/samverkan/samverka-med-oss/om-samverkan/grants-and-innovation-office-0>

As a great deal of ISP research is Centre based, there are several connections to internal as well as external cooperation. One of several advantages of the Centres is their organisation with a board including members representing external organisations and companies. This means that research cooperation is not only contingent on individual joint projects but is ensured through a stable structure for continuity and long-term commitment.

All subject researchers at ISP are continuously involved in disseminating their research results externally. There is also a communications office at the university supporting researchers regarding various forms of communication. A communication officer is especially assigned to assist the ISP department staff. Our researchers appear frequently in media such as the daily press, radio, and TV to comment on events and to share research results. Visibility creates cooperation opportunities and is important to cultivate.

External Interaction is not restricted to media appearance, but to a great extent takes place in researchers' participation in conferences, seminars, and networks in academia as well as in non-academic contexts. Several researchers also produce textbooks designed for various educational levels, which is a way of disseminating research results.

5.2 EXTERNAL COLLABORATION AND INTERACTION

An overarching pattern in ISP collaborations as well as in Karlstad University generally is the strong regional feature. Largely, cooperation is linked to companies, authorities, the region and municipalities in Värmland, which is natural considering the university's location and mandate. It is impossible to give a fair and full description of all externally ongoing collaborations and interactions at ISP in this limited scope. Below, we present a sample of projects to complement the background data in Table 3.2.

The Academy for Smart Specialisation is a long-term project at Karlstad University and Region Värmland (RV) aiming to renew industry in Värmland, the public sector and research at Karlstad University. Researchers

in gender studies, psychology and social work take part in different sub projects. Gender studies staff, for instance, are part of and responsible for developing the strategy for smart specialisation in Värmland regarding gender mainstreaming, which is a cross-disciplinary specialisation, integrated in the five different ventures under the smart specialisation umbrella in Värmland. <https://www.kau.se/genusakademin/om-genusakademin>

Collaboration on clinical research between Karlstad University and Region Värmland (RV) aims to enhance clinical research and contribute to high quality research of relevance to healthcare. The partnership is multiannual and covers the areas of mental disorders, health promoting lifestyles and equity in health. Over the years, several psychology researchers have been involved in projects as a result of this partnership. <https://www.kau.se/samverkan/forskning-och-innovationssamverkan/forskningssamverkan/samverkan-om-klinisk-forskning>

Dance late in life is a further example of systematic cooperation in conjunction with a major externally funded research project, conducted by researchers in sociology, and aiming to increase understanding of the meanings of dance and its significance to seniors. An important role is played by guest columnists, on the project website, commenting on senior dance from various perspectives. <https://www.kau.se/dans-sent-i-livet>

5.3 EXTERNAL IMPACT OF ISP RESEARCH

The significance of ISP research to the community at large is complex and difficult to ascertain as this is not determined by citations and impact value. In certain projects and collaborations, the impact is close to application or influence, while other findings may have greater significance much later.

One example in which research at ISP can be disseminated and be of wider significance is the seminar series the Gender Dialogue in the Swedish Riksdag. On one or two occasions a year current gender studies research is presented at a seminar in the Riksdag. The chairperson and the director of CGF are responsible for the seminar series.

A further example concerns the link established between external organisations and ISP research through external doctoral students (i.e., industry-employed) who are employed elsewhere and whose third-cycle education is funded by the employer. Recently, such a doctoral student was recruited in social work through a partnership between Karlstad University and Region Värmland.

6. INTERACTION BETWEEN RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

6.1 MEASURES AND STRUCTURES TO ENHANCE THE LINK BETWEEN RESEARCH AND TEACHING

Efforts to create opportunities for interaction between research and education is continuous at several levels from departmental planning, via university central support structures, to the individual teacher's teaching and researching practice.

At present, the department offers a great number of courses in five degree programmes. The degree programmes include the two professional degree programmes for psychologists and social workers, and the Bachelor's degree programme in sociology called Social Analysis. At Master's level, we offer Master programmes in critical social analysis and a Master programme in social work. Programme and course development work continuously involve considerations of the current expertise among teaching staff, future needs, recruitment, and allocation of duties. The aim is to take advantage of teaching staff's expertise and experiences of their own research in teaching as far as possible. We also strive to give doctoral students the opportunity to teach in areas relating to their thesis project.

A vibrant research environment with research and teaching in interaction is an explicit requirement for our degree programmes. In connection with the regular evaluation of the subject social work in 2020–2021, interaction between research and teaching was reviewed as part of the evaluation. Likewise, successful interaction is important for the entitlement to award new qualifications. For example, in the ongoing application process for approval to award qualifications for the Healthcare Curator programme in social work the research–education interplay is emphasised as an important aspect.

The Centre for Teaching and Learning (UPE) supports and stimulates the teachers' teaching skills at Karlstad University. Its activities rest on research in the area of higher education pedagogy. The unit offers set courses for teaching in higher education and tailored courses and seminars based on specific needs. UPE is an important resource regarding how the research–education interaction can be developed based on pedagogical and subject–specific teaching perspectives. Teaching and research staff at ISP are continuously engaged in teaching and development issues with the support of UPE. <https://www.kau.se/om-universitetet/om-karlstads-universitet/vart-ansvar/universitetspedagogiska-enheten>

6.2 RESEARCH ENHANCING QUALITY OF EDUCATION AND VICE VERSA

In part, courses offered and course content at ISP are determined by the research that teachers are involved in. Research and studies at CGF and gender studies, for example, are closely linked as several undergraduate and master level courses are designed in relation to the platform's four research areas. Several social work members are involved in FOU Welfare Värmland centre projects, through which teachers gain experiences and knowledge that can directly be applied in teaching. The concept of social organising has long united researchers in sociology and the concept has been explored in seminars. The study plan for the Social Analysis programme states that the concept is central, which is a way of combining research and undergraduate studies. A further example of how research can generate courses is that the research on personal life, emotions and everyday organising has led to the joint departmental distance course offering, "The Family in a New Century" (7.5 HE credits), in which researchers from all the four subjects teach and discuss the family as a concept and phenomenon.

Uppdrags AB at Karlstad University provides important support for researchers when it comes to transforming research into courses. This unit manages the university's contract courses, which may be commissioned by external organisations or originate in ideas from teachers and researchers <https://www.kau.se/karlstads-universitets-uppdrags-ab>. An example of a contract programme generated by ongoing research at ISP on social and emotional support to domestic violence exposed parents is the Project Support <https://www.kau.se/karlstads-universitets-uppdrags-ab/uppdragsutbildningar/halsa-var-d-omsorg/foraldraskap/project>.

Further examples of how research at ISP reaches students are course literature used written by several researchers. This type of literature usually surveys research in the teachers' research fields. Also, articles published by the teachers are used in teaching, thus contributing to fruitful interaction. Students generally appreciate working with course literature related to research at their own university.

In connection with Bachelor and Master degree projects, there is often a natural and close link to ongoing research in the department. Vice versa, student degree projects may also lead to research. Degree projects may, for example, be published in peer-reviewed research journals, and research may be inspired by teaching or students. The regular contacts between our researchers and students are often vital and inspiring occasions for new challenges and questions generating research.

7. LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

Alphabetically ordered publication list with 10 selected peer-reviewed ISP publications.

- Anniko, K.M., Boersma, K., & Tillfors, M. (2018). Sources of stress and worry in the development of stress-related mental health problems: A longitudinal investigation from early- to mid-adolescence. *Anxiety, Stress, & Coping*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10615806.2018.1549657>
- Balkmar, D., & Mellström, U. (2018) Masculinity and Autonomous Vehicles. A Degendered or Resegregated Future System of Automobility? *Transfers: Interdisciplinary Journal of Mobility Studies*, Volume 8, Issue 1 • Spring 2018: 44–63.
<https://doi.org/10.3167/TRANS.2018.080105>
- Ettema, D., Gärling, T., Olsson, L. E., & Friman, M. (2010). Out-of-home activities, daily travel, and subjective well-being. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*, 44(9), 723–732.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tra.2010.07.005>

- Jonsson, A. (2015) "Post-mortem social death – exploring the absence of the deceased." *Contemporary Social Science*, 10 (3):284-295.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/21582041.2015.1078117>
- Kristensson, P., Wästlund, E., & Söderlund, M. (2017). Influencing consumers to choose environment friendly offerings: Evidence from field experiments. *Journal of Business Research*, 76, 89-97. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2017.03.003>
- Landstedt, E., & Almquist, Y.B. (2019) Intergenerational patterns of mental health problems: the role of childhood peer status position. *BMC Psychiatry*. 19(1), 286.
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-019-2278-1>
- Mehrabi, T. (2020). Queer Ecologies of Death in the Lab: Rethinking Waste, Decomposition and Death through a Queerfeminist Lens. *Australian Feminist Studies*, 35(104), 138-154.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/08164649.2020.1775068>
- Olsson, H., & Bergman, A. (2021). From silence to recognition: Swedish social services and the handling of honor-based violence. *European Journal of Social Work*, 6(3), 241–256.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13691457.2021.1882395>
- Pechurina, A. (2020) "Researching identities through material possessions: The case of diasporic objects." *Current Sociology*, 69(5):669-683.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120927746>
- Rosenberg, A., Ngandu, T., Rusanen, M., Antikainen, R., Bäckman, L., Havulinna, S., Hänninen, T., Laatikainen, T., Lehtisalo, J., Levälähti, E., Lindström, J., Pajananen, T., Peltonen, M., Soininen, H., Stigsdotter-Neely, A., Strandberg, T., Tuomilehto, J., Solomon, A., & Kivipelto, M. (2018). Multidomain lifestyle intervention benefits a large elderly population at risk for cognitive decline and dementia regardless of baseline characteristics: The FINGER trial. *Alzheimer's & Dementia*, 14, 263-270.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jalz.2017.09.006>



Department of Social and Psychological Studies

BACKGROUND DATA

Periodic Research Review

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the background data is to provide an overview of the evaluation unit, Department of Social and Psychological Studies, regarding: staff, economy, research funding, internationalisation, bibliometrics, collaborations and utilization of research for the period of 2018-2020. Details regarding data source or possible deviation will be stated in the individual figure text.

STAFF

Table 1.1. Staff via category, full-time equivalents (FTE) and FTE distribution.

The table only includes research staff employed at the evaluation unit. In cases where staff is not employed at the evaluation unit (a research centre and targeted initiative), an account string is used at the evaluation unit to identify individuals who are part of the unit. Staff categories, separated by gender, that are included in the table are lecturers, senior lecturers, professors, researchers, career-development positions and visiting researcher fellows.

2020

POSITION	GENDER	FTE	PROPORTION TEACHING	PROPORTION RESEARCH
Postdoc	K	0,13	100	0
Professor	K	4,49	31	69
Professor	M	0,45	49	51
Adjunct professor	K	0,29	94	6
Visiting professor	K	0,13	0	100
Directly appointed professor	K	0,95	26	74
Professor senior	K	0,17	50	50
Professor senior	M	0,04	0	100
Lecturer	K	9,43	94	6
Lecturer	M	4,65	100	0
Senior lecturer	K	15,34	85	15
Senior lecturer	M	7,56	95	8
TOTAL		43,63	82	18

Source: The personal administrative system, Primula

2019

POSITION	GENDER	FTE	PROPORTION TEACHING	PROPORTION RESEARCH
Postdoc	K	0,09	100	0
Professor	K	4,05	34	66
Professor	M	0,81	58	42
Adjunct professor	K	0,5	100	0
Directly appointed professor	K	0,66	51	49
Professor senior	M	0,03	0	100
Lecturer	K	9,96	89	11
Lecturer	M	4,72	80	20
Senior lecturer	K	13,64	88	12
Senior lecturer	M	6,95	90	10
TOTAL		41,41	82	18

Source: The personal administrative system, Primula

2018

POSITION	GENDER	FTE	PROPORTION TEACHING	PROPORTION RESEARCH
Postdoc	K	0,75	0	100
Professor	K	4,77	31	69
Professor	M	1,29	63	37
Directly appointed professor	K	1	30	70
Lecturer	K	9,62	90	10
Lecturer	M	4,46	75	25
Senior lecturer	K	12,8	92	8
Senior lecturer	M	7,17	92	8
TOTAL		41,86	79	21

Source: The personal administrative system, Primula

Table 1.2. Career-development levels among teachers, number of full-time equivalents.

	PROPORTION TEACHERS WITH A COMPLETED PHD	PROPORTION OF READERS AMONG SENIOR LECTURERS
2020		
Female	72%	4%
Male	71%	10%
TOTAL	71%	6%
2019		
Female	71%	3%
Male	69%	17%
TOTAL	71%	8%
2018		
Female	74%	0%
Male	71%	23%
TOTAL	73%	10%

Source: The personal administrative system, Primula

THIRD-CYCLE STUDIES

Table 2.1. Doctoral students

ADMISSION SUBJECT	GENDER	YEAR OF ADMISSION	STUDY ACTIVITY AUTUMN TERM 2020
Psychology	F	2018	49
Psychology	F	2020	59
Psychology	F	2020	80
Psychology	F	2014	51
Psychology	F	2018	25
Psychology	F (I)	2015	50
Psychology	F (I)	2015	50
Psychology	F (I)	2019	46
Psychology	F (I)	2016	50
Psychology	M	2019	62
Psychology	M	2020	45
Psychology	M	2017	80
Psychology	M	2018	60
Psychology	M (I)	2016	18
Social Work	F	2020	94
Social Work	F	2014	20
Social Work	F (I)	2012	25
Social Work	M	2018	80
Sociology	F	2020	92
Sociology	F	2020	53
Sociology	F	2017	70
Sociology	F	2016	76

Industrial/external doctoral students is marked with (I).

Source: Ladok

Table 2.2. Graduate licentiate and doctoral students separated by gender

LICENTIATE AND DOCTORAL DEGREE	GENDER	2018	2019	2020
Psychology	F	1	4	
Psychology	M	3	2	
Social Work	F	1		1
TOTAL SUM		5	6	1

Source: Ladok

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Table 3.1 Profit and loss statement for research per year

Amounts in SEK 1 000

	2018	2019	2020
REVENUE			
Direct government funding ¹	12 550	12 781	14 687
External funding ²	8 348	6 396	6 426
Inter-company revenue ³	1 435	1 606	538
REVENUE TOTAL	22 333	20 783	21 651
EXPENDITURE			
Staffing costs			
Salaries researchers and teachers	-12 592	-10 866	-12 947
Remunerations	-308	-367	-290
Salaries administration and technical staff	-	-	-36
Other staff costs	-171	-158	-24
Staffing costs total⁴	-13 072	-11 392	-13 297
Other operating expenses			
Other operation expenses ⁵	-1 548	-953	-888
Inter-company costs and expenses			
Inter-company costs and expenses ⁶	-7 198	-6 641	-6 441
EXPENDITURE TOTAL	-21 818	-18 985	-20 626
TRANSFERS			
Funds for financing grants	138	142	-
Grants paid	-138	-142	-
Transfers Total	-	-	-
SUBTOTAL	515	1797	1 025

Source: Raindance

¹ Funding directly allocated to the university by the Swedish government.

² Includes revenue from fees, other reimbursements and funding. Funding which can include grants from Councils, other public research funding agencies, municipalities, regions and research foundations.

³ Inter-company transactions includes, for example, grants and/or compensations from other parts of the university or from the relevant audit unit as well.

⁴ Staffing costs mainly refer to costs for personel who receive salary from the relevant audit unit.

⁵ Other operation expenses can include, materials, costs for hired expertise, other consultats, travel costs, costs for premises of campus, depreciation, etc.

⁶ Includes, for example, inter-company staff costs, internal room rent for lecture halls, laboratories, offices and other intercompany expenses such as indirect costs for the faculty and university levels, printing and copying costs etc.

Table 3.2. Research funding sources separated by amounts granted per funder and year (SEK 1000)

FUNDER	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	TOTAL AMOUNT GRANTED
Public funds ¹	150	150	150	150	-	-	-	600
Government of Sweden ²	-	-	-	44	54	-	-	98
Research councils ³	-	-	-	-	12	24	12	48
Research Council for Health, Working Life and Welfare ⁴	-	770	1 050	1 130	-	-	-	2 950
Research Council for Health, Working Life and Welfare ⁵	-	-	-	-	408	-	-	408
Swedish Research Council ⁶	-	437	450	463	477	-	-	1 826
Swedish Research Council ⁷	-	-	1 150	1 150	1 150	-	-	3 450
Swedish Research Council ⁸	-	-	-	-	130	-	-	130
Vinnova - Swedish Innovation Agency ⁹	-	-	225	225	-	-	-	450
Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society ¹⁰	-	-	-	1 201	-	-	-	1 201
Dalarna University ¹¹	23	45	45	23	-	-	-	135
Dalarna University ¹²	-	-	-	-	310	-	-	310
Riksbankens jubileumsfond ¹³	834	834	834	-	-	-	-	2 503
Foundation ¹⁴	322	331	57	-	-	-	-	709
Foundation ¹⁵	54	81	81	81	-	-	-	298
Foundation ¹⁶	-	-	-	-	1 435	-	-	1 435
Region ¹⁷	40	40	40	40	40	40	-	240
Region ¹⁸	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	280
Region ¹⁹	-	-	350	-	-	-	-	350
Region ²⁰	-	-	-	-	300	-	-	300
Region Värmland ²¹	525	525	525	-	-	-	-	1 575
Region Värmland ²²	-	2 064	2 949	3 097	3 276	2 577	-	13 963
Region Värmland ²³	-	33	33	33	33	33	33	200
Region Värmland ²⁴	-	-	394	-	-	-	-	394
Region Värmland ²⁵	-	-	511	419	-	-	-	930
Region Värmland ²⁶	-	-	521	521	-	-	-	1 041
Swedish companies ²⁷	36	36	36	36	36	-	-	180
Swedish companies ²⁸	40	40	40	45	45	45	45	300
Swedish companies ²⁹	-	-	25	75	-	-	-	100
Swedish companies ³⁰	-	-	6	6	17	17	11	57
EU Framework Programme ³¹	-	-	512	768	896	384	-	2 561
TOTAL AMOUNT GRANTED /YEAR			10 025	9 547	8 659			

Source: Raindance

Projects

¹ Vti - Lars Eriksson

² Jämställdhet vid bemötande

³ Expert reports, RCN

⁴ Forte Clary Krekula

⁵ Risksam

⁶ Kulturarv Vr Gu Mona Lilja

⁷ Mekanismer parkinson

⁸ Ofärdens barbar - VR SU

⁹ Hantering av stresssjukdomar

¹⁰ CIVILSAMHÄLLET'S NYA ROLLER

¹² Våld i nära relationer Helen O

¹³ Dansa i lust och fågring rj

¹⁴ Brottsofferfonden - Umu

¹⁵ Forskarutb. Anna Norlén

¹⁶ RJ Sabbatical - Anna S Neely

¹⁷ Forskarutb. Anna-Karin Olsson

¹⁸ Forskarutb. Madeleine Johansson

¹⁹ Ip-Ract konferens mars 2018

²⁰ Följeforskning Dans Parkinson

²¹ Liv - adjunktstöd psykologi

²² Samverkansavtal livpsykologi

²³ Forskarutbildn Mehmet Gröncu

²⁴ Kaulivmedel 2018 Hjälpökande

²⁵ Kaulivmedel 2018 Ett problem

²⁶ Kaumedel 2018 Kartläggning

²⁷ Handl Mats Borell Doktorand Ps

²⁸ Forskarutb. Lis Johles 2015-²²

²⁹ Forskarutb. Elizabeth Ekman

³⁰ Floating-Room (gåva 2019)

³¹ Norface Daisie

APPLICATION STATISTICS

Table 4.1. Applications statistics for the number of applications, amounts applied for and granted, and approval rate, separated by year

YEAR	NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS	AMOUNT APPLIED (SEK 1000)	AMOUNT GRANTED (SEK 1000)	SUCCESS RATE %
2018	17	64 759	0	0%
2019	29	52 787	5 313	10%
2020	22	54 039	930	2%

Source: Data of submitted applications are collected from the University's internal Form for external funding and later merged with data of granted applications.

RESEARCH PRODUCTION (BIBLIOMETRIC DATA)

Table 5.1. Publications in Diva per type of publication and type of content

	PEER-REVIEWED	OTHER ACADEMIC	OTHER (POPULAR SCIENCE, DISCUSSION, ETC.)	TOTAL
Article in journal	145	4	1	150
Article, review/survey	3			3
Article, book review	1	3		4
Book	3	2		5
Doctoral thesis, monograph		1		1
Doctoral thesis, comprehensive summary		4		4
Chapter in book	16	10		26
Conference paper	6			6
Report	1	4	1	6
Collection (editor)	5	1		6
Other			2	2
TOTAL	180	29	4	213

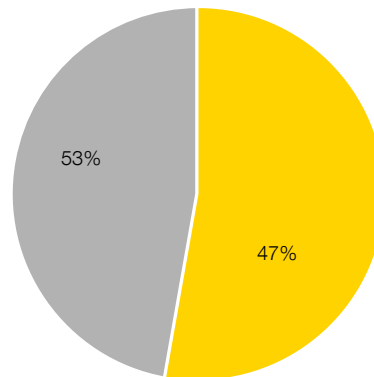
Source: DIVA

Table 5.2. Number of publications published with open access in Diva

Open access Closed access

Figure 1. Share of open access publications

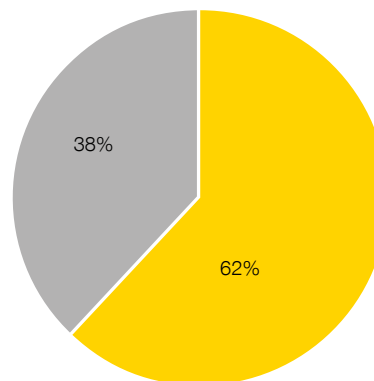
The piechart contrasts the share of publications that have a fulltext in DiVA or are indicated to be open access and the share of publications that is not freely accessible on the internet, i.e. closed access.



Open access Closed access

Figure 2. Share of open access articles

Open access is most common for articles. The figure shows the share of open and closed access articles to give a more concise and likely fairer picture of the ISP output with regard to open access.



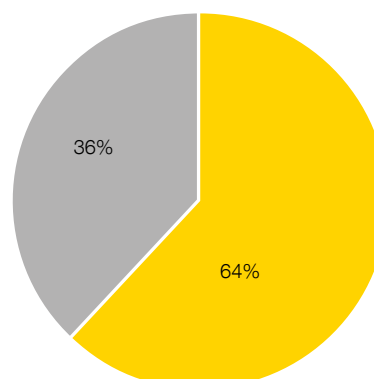
INTERNATIONALISATION

Table 6.1. Co-publications with international researchers.

International National

Figure 1. International vs National authorships

Figure 1 compares the share of publications with at least one international co-authors to publications where all authors are affiliated to Karlstad University or another Swedish HEI.



COLLABORATION AND APPLICATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

Table 7.1. The number of partners in ongoing research projects divided into private organisations and public organisations.

There are no collective records of partners in ongoing projects for the evaluation unit for the period of 2018-2020. The design of the software system and routines for register the data is currently under development.

Table 7.2. Number of evaluated innovative ideas per employee. Number of innovative ideas that have received funding. Number of registered intangible

YEAR	NUMBER OF EVALUATED IDEAS	NUMBER OF IDEAS THAT RECEIVED FUNDS	NUMBER OF REGISTERED INTANGIBLE ASSETS	OTHER UTILIZATION, COMMENT
2018	0	0	0	
2019	0	0	0	
2020	1	1	0	Impacting national policies, VAVES

The Background data report is produced by the Periodic research review's administrative Support group; Sofia Andersson, Charlotte Månsson, Karin Brattfjord, Lotta Utterberg, Nadja Neumann och Patrik Bångierius.

December 2021

Assessment Report

**Professor Janice McLaughlin, Newcastle University, Professor, Daniel Västfjäll, Linköping University,
Associate Professor, Hilda Rømer Christensen, University of Copenhagen**

0. Brief Summary

ISP is a large department, with a strong teaching history and volume of commitment. Due to this not all staff are research active or have a research background. A significant degree of research activity and support is developed through collaborations in Centres. Much of the research activity is being pursued by senior colleagues, but there are mechanisms and encouragements for supporting greater research activity amongst more teaching focused colleagues. Related to this there is an agenda to see research within and across the department have more strategic development and emphasis. The processes to enable that requires more development and will involve enhanced measures for encouraging successful research collaboration to provide a strategic focus. Recommendations for what these can be are included in the final section of the report. There are aspects of our evaluation that are limited by the structure of the process. The scheduled time was not sufficient to hear from all the subjects on the different topics; the lack of representation from lecturing/teaching staff/PhD students made it difficult to ascertain their views on the research culture of the department; the lack of detail on department activities occurring within centres made it difficult to get a full picture of research activities, data on research applications, income and success. There is clear commitment from the colleagues we spoke with from within the department and faculty to grow research activity and strategic direction. The next stage is ensuring the processes are there to sustain that and include all colleagues in the process.

1. Research and Scientific Development

Across all units of ISP there is a growing research profile and agenda. Professorial staff have been appointed (in some cases on a secondment basis) to enhance research activity and values and these developments are showing an impact on the range of activity being undertaken. Given that centres are important to the research activities and direction of many colleagues, we are not fully able to evaluate the research being undertaken as much is not included in what we have been able to look at. The limitations of what we can say are particularly marked for this section given that activities occurring within Centres is not included. In terms of both data and narrative, going forward making more visible what department activity is occurring within centres is important to understanding how (or whether) the centres are providing a research space that supports the research activities and success of all colleagues in the department.

There are developments within research activity in the department that are important to acknowledge:

- Senior colleagues are successfully pursuing research activity across publication and funding (funding is the area we can least evaluate) that is making a mark regionally, nationally and internationally.
- There are activities such as seminars, conference funding, possibilities for bidding for enhanced research time to develop research grants occurring within the department as well as the centres. It is important this occurs to avoid a structure and reality that the department is a teaching unit and all research activity is channelled via centres.
- The publications included in the review showed that there is some exciting and innovative work being done across all the units.
- There is work underway to identify thematic areas for the department that map onto wider societal challenges and possible future areas of strategic priority for external funders. Sustainable aging is an area that was discussed and we can see the logic of developing. This theme has scope for encouraging greater research collaboration, strength through critical mass and funding success.
- Across the department the PhD students are important to the research culture and success. In some units, particularly psychology, they are also key actors in the carrying out of funded areas of research activity.
- We heard some good examples from individual senior colleagues of bringing early career researchers on by including them in bid and writing activity.

There are areas in the development of research activity where there is scope to continue to work upon.

- Alongside the research themes emerging at the department level, there are themes at the unit level. We noted that what seems the smallest unit (in terms of staff and at this stage no PhD programme) has the largest number of themes. Therefore, across all the different themes is there a risk of there being too many that work against them providing strategic direction? We note the sense of a top-down management structure in section 3, how will ISP ensure that thematic priorities are supported by colleagues?
- Research needs greater departmental focus/research leadership if it is going to develop without solely relying on the centres to be the research foci.
- The size of some individual units can make it difficult to cover 'core activities', alongside having time for broader thinking/strategizing.
- We noted in Table 4.1 that covers applications being submitted through the department that the data seems to indicate (excluding 2019) very low success rates. While the funding landscape is challenging it would be worth considering if success rates are lower than those going in via centres, and what the reason for that might be.

2. The Unit's Composition and Academic Qualification

Across all areas of ISP there is a mix of colleagues at all career stages, with the majority either Lecturer or Senior Lecturer. While some of those colleagues were recruited before research became an important goal of the department and University, there remain challenges with recruiting people with a PhD for lecturer level posts (the proportion of colleagues with a PhD has remained unchanged in last 3 years). Subjects with a practice focus in their degrees require colleagues with practice experience and accreditation and this does not always sit easily with seeking colleagues with research experience at PhD level. It would have been interesting to see data on staff retention. Alongside the challenges of appointing colleagues with a PhD, we got a sense from discussion that retaining early career level colleagues is also a challenge. This creates what appears to be a comparatively stark hierarchy between early career colleagues with significant teaching loads, and research professors whose teaching is primarily geared towards PhD supervision.

There is work being done respond to the challenges to research direction created by the staffing profile; there is a clear intent to have a larger proportion of colleagues be research active:

- Lecturers and Senior Lecturers have 20% research time, whether they have a PhD or not.
- Colleagues are being supported to develop a research profile and to make the step to Reader.
- Practice focused units are giving greater focus on research profile in staff recruitment, particularly when creating replacement posts due to retirements.

There is further work the Department (and University) could pursue to take this work further and see research activity present across the wider staff grouping:

- We did not speak with early career colleagues, and it would have been useful to hear from them about how effective the 20% research workload allocation is in providing genuine research time. Alongside ensuring this time is protected there is scope for additional mentoring work to support people develop research plans and produce stronger publication activity.
- For those colleagues who do not have a PhD, there is scope for developing supportive approaches of enabling them to combine teaching with undertaking a PhD.
- There seems scope for greater use of research-based teaching (particularly at MA level), to help build research expertise and publication, particularly in subject areas where the background of the teachers and the teaching is practice oriented.
- There seemed some evidence of an attitude against investing time in the research careers of early career colleagues because they will leave anyway. Low retention of early career colleagues is experienced by other universities of a similar profile as Karlstad. However, this attitude can become a self-fulfilling prophecy if it affects approaches to supporting career progression. It is important that Lecturer/Senior Lecturers have a clear sense that they are valued not just as teachers.
- There are shifts in the wider context that may help with recruiting people with a PhD, alongside ensuring recruitment approaches support this goal. For example, the ISP website is very teaching focused and does not give the impression that research is important to the department (and university). It was good to hear the Vice Chancellor recognise that and speak of the work they are doing to promote Karlstad University as a rural university with strong ties to global research communities, with close connections and support from the local environment.

3. Organisation, Leadership and Management

As a large department with distinctive units IPS has a significant range of responsibilities, activities and demands to be responded to within its organisation, leadership, and management. There is a formal leadership team at the department level, which subjects feed into via the Director of Study. At the subject area level there is a Head of Subject who has responsibility for research and is 'in most cases' a Reader or Chair. The Head of Subject is not part of the Department Management Team and the Head of Department does not need to be a Reader or Chair.

We note some positives about organisation, leadership and management:

- At the subject level, Heads of Subject, who are research active, are pursuing research objectives, not just in relation to their own research activities, but in building research cultures, support and activity within their subjects.
- The existence of emerging cross school research themes speaks to dialogue occurring across the research development activity in subjects.

We also note some issues that may be impediments to building the research strengths of the units and department:

- Management structures do not appear to prioritise research. It was acknowledged that the leadership team is focussed on teaching issues. While in some ways this is understandable given the volume of teaching activity and its importance to the financial stability of the department, if there are not conscious mechanisms for ensuring planning for research development is included, it will not happen. While subjects are well placed to develop their research activity, wider oversight and strategy planning at department level is important. It both ensures teaching and research are considered in department forward thinking, while also indicating symbolically that research matters. Therefore, research needs to be built into the responsibilities of the Department Leadership Team.
- While there are events (the Departmental Council for example) for ISP to come together, in discussion this was acknowledged as about 'information sharing'. This implies that there are less opportunities for broader department colleagues to participate in discussions about research direction. The structure seems a mixture of top-down management, with a lack in research coordination within that structure. It will be helpful going forward to ensure lecturer and senior lecturers play some role in debating research direction as it is integrated more fully into management structures.
- We do wonder how much research track record is important to the appointment of the Head and Deputy Head of Department, while also aware that there may also be some hesitation from Professor/Reader level colleagues to consider the role. It can be difficult to balance ongoing research activity with such senior management roles, but are there ways to incentivise senior researchers to consider the roles? For example, by examining support structures that mean the role can be balanced with research activity.
- At department and subject area level it was not completely clear how individual and collective research activity is monitored and evaluated. There seems some scope at the collective level to think about measures of success that can be evaluated over time (and some role for the Faculty in setting those). At the level of individual colleagues, targets for research activity can be challenged, if it feels they are not connected to appropriate resources to make such targets achievable, but there can be scope for including research planning and discussion between colleagues outside of formal HR processes.
- The presentation from the department, noted the issues around some units being small, is there potential for greater collaboration (or even merger) between units, particularly sociology and gender studies?

4. Collaboration and Application of Research Findings

In the documentation and in discussions with the department it was noted that the dynamic of collaboration was more extensive than was visible to us. We explored why this was the case in discussion and it was explained that the structure of the self-evaluation report made this difficult, in particular that we were not looking at research centres, where much of the collaboration and application occurred. This is reasonable to an extent, but also looking at the ISP website collaborations were not visible there either. In discussions it was clear collaborations, both with other academics nationally and internationally, as well as with clinicians, policy makers and practitioners was happening and is central to much research activity. Capturing that and making it visible to others is an important element of building on the department's research objectives.

Some of the collaboration and application of research findings that was visible included:

- Involvement in large EU grants is an important aspect of the department's internationalisation agenda and one within which there has been some success.
- Close ties with regional external actors in commerce, welfare, social care and healthcare contexts are present and some of them are long term – an important factor in the sustainability of external impact. These collaborations seemed particularly strong in Psychology and Social Work.
- The presence of industry-employed PhD students is an important element of developing and maintaining external collaborations.
- A key value across units that came across in the discussions was the importance of 'real world' application of research, rooted in the regional community. This is an important value and one the Department is rightly proud of.

Areas where collaboration and application could be further enhanced include:

- Capturing the 'impact' of research in external contexts is difficult, the self-evaluation report rightly highlights that it is more complex than academic metrics such as citation (which themselves are not necessarily good markers of academic impact). However, there is now greater recognition of ways we can produce, gather and measure different forms of application or impact research has. Due to the influence of the REF in the UK context there are now multiple sources (often online) of advice and training on measuring impact and engaging with some of that could be useful. Including this kind of training in the Department's research support mechanisms for all colleagues, including PhD students is a worthwhile investment.
- As we have noted in other aspects of our report, the lack of visibility, in the department rather than the centre, of collaboration and application/impact is an issue. Being able to tell a narrative of what the Department's research enables, and the types of collaboration it has, is an important vehicle for encouraging future collaborative possibilities.
- While we are not fully able to evaluate this, we got the impression that local collaboration appears predominant in the volume of external collaboration the Department is involved with. Such collaborations are important, but is there a risk they are blocking the possibility of giving greater emphasis to prioritising larger more national or international collaborations instead?

5. Inclusive Culture: Internationalisation, Gender Equality, and Disciplinary Transparency

There are important dimensions of inclusivity present within ISP. Within the data provided it is clear women make up the majority of the department's colleagues, this is unsurprising given the disciplinary areas of the department. It was not completely clear from the data, but, while women continue to be in the majority at Chair level, the proportion of men who are Readers amongst Senior Lecturers appeared higher (Table 1.2). We did not get the chance to clarify this and whether it means that the work to support colleagues progress to Reader is working better for men than for women. There is evidence of international networking and influence, particularly amongst senior colleagues. Open access publications are present and financially supported, but within journal articles they are not currently the majority (Table 5.2, Figure 2).

There are areas of inclusivity that are important to acknowledge:

- The Journal Norma – International Journal of Masculinity Studies is a notable example of international presence.
- The high proportion of publications in peer reviewed journals (table 5.1) is a good indication of international level research activity.
- It was very positive to hear that PGRs have funding for attending conference and networking.

Areas where further work could be undertaken to widen inclusivity:

- The equality data looks only at gender, while collecting data on other important equality issues such as race and ethnicity, disability, age, and caring responsibility does generate privacy issues, it would be good to see some reflection on other dimensions of equality in these review processes. As part of this it would also be useful for the university to review its recruitment and human resources processes in respect of recruiting and support for staff members from a range of different backgrounds and different marginality status.
- We did not have the opportunity to ask if Karlstad University has developed a Gender Equality Plan. If not this will be important to do to ensure gender equality and to aid internationalization. The Gender Equality plan is a requirement by the EU Horizon Europe programmes in relation to participation in applications and research programs.
- An important aspect of internationalisation is the use of English in internal communications. It was noted in discussion that much internal communication remains in Swedish. This can be a barrier to international recruitment of staff and PhD students. It would be good to see increased use of English in communication, alongside visible support for overseas colleagues in learning Swedish.
- The international agenda would also be supported by improvements in the Department website to ensure it is more research oriented (stressing international collaboration for example) and appealing to researchers based overseas.
- While authoring with international authors is one measure of internationalisation, the quality and presence of the journal is also important to the level of international reach. Peer support by colleagues with success in publishing in high profile journals is one way to support that, alongside collaboration with international projects.
- There are important changes in the landscape of open access publishing across Europe linked to Plan S. This should aid with seeing the proportion of journal articles appearing in open access format.
- The connections to international research networks appeared to be primarily amongst senior staff. An important stage in building people's international presence is involvement in international research projects. Continuing to support colleagues in this activity is important and will also aid retention of early career colleagues.

6. Connection Between Education and Research

Teaching clearly has a strong presence in people's (particularly lecturers/senior lecturers) day to day work and within the organisation of ISP. There are a range of programmes at both the undergraduate and postgraduate taught level. It is central to the financial sustainability of the department. The presence of Psychology and Social Work bring the demands of retaining professional accreditation, as well as requiring colleagues from practice backgrounds. There appears to be a lively PhD community and it was noted that the department is usually able to appoint high level candidates to the PhD positions funded by the University and through external funding. While we did not speak with PhD students there seemed to be activities at subject and department level for them to engage in research activity. Gender studies aims to have a recognised PhD programme, with more time we would have liked to hear how the plans for that are being pursued.

Some notable ways in which education and research interact are:

- Social work is looking at how new MA provision can feed into research activity.
- That lecturers without a PhD have time for professional research development, encourages teaching to be informed by research even in instances where the individual may not be particularly research active.
- The activities of research active colleagues do appear to be feeding into areas of teaching at both UG and PGT level.

There are some ways that the connection between research and education could be enhanced:

- The department website functions primarily as a window to teaching activity. It is important that the research has much more visibility on it, not just for the benefit that brings to promotion of ISP's research activity and identity. It is also a marketing tool for the department's teaching programmes, particularly (but not only) at MA and PhD level. We acknowledge this is an issue of resourcing from Faculty and Centre as well as from the Department.
- MA programmes can be useful for research in several ways and could play this role more strategically. MA research projects can be designed to feed into the research agendas of colleagues and projects (particularly in areas of collaboration with social and regional agencies). They are also ways of identifying strong candidates for PhD programmes.
- Professors' teaching time is dedicated to PhD supervision. It is important that professors have the space to pursue the research leadership activity required of them. But this model can feed into a sense of a strong hierarchy between lecturer/senior lecturer staff and those who are professors. Would some presence of professorial colleagues in UG and MA provision guard against that and promote the research led nature of the teaching provision?
- In terms of the desired PhD programme in Gender Studies. If an independent program is not feasible, would closer cooperation in the framework of the Gex cel (**GEXcel International Collegium for Advanced Transdisciplinary Gender Studies**) network be a channel for creating synergy and scholarly exchanges that could aid the establishment of a diverse centre with a critical mass of scholars?

7. Concluding Assessment and recommendations for Continued Development

In general, we recommend a shift towards greater recognition, visibility and time given to research in ISP, to build on the work already done and ensure a clear research strategy is being pursued and evaluated.

- Organisation
 - Research requires more inclusion within ISP's organisational structure through the leadership team and the formation of department planning processes and agendas.
 - The inclusion of Subject Heads in department management team meetings.
 - Greater consideration of research issues within department management meeting agendas.
 - Research expertise and focus to be a factor in the appointment of Head of Department, alongside looking at incentives for research active senior colleagues to take on management roles.
 - Enhance opportunities for lecturer/senior lecturer colleagues to feed into discussions about research strategy and planning.
 - Develop measures of success to help evaluate whether research aims/strategies are having their desired impact.
 - Immediate investment, supported by Faculty, in the website for the department to ensure research is promoted (alongside looking at other promotional materials/activities).
- Recruitment of colleagues
 - Greater presence of research priorities within recruitment priorities and approaches.
 - Work towards lecturer level positions being at the PhD level through how recruitment is marketed and approached.
 - It is important that beyond the department, the work ongoing to improve the marketing of the university to support recruitment activity continues and is invested in.
 - Where appropriate develop the research capacity of lecturers without PhD.
- Research activity and collaboration
 - Visibility of research activity and collaboration needs to be stronger to support several aims, including colleague recruitment, greater funding success and future research collaboration.
 - Continue to build the research international networks and collaborations that enable involvement in research consortia through which both income and expertise in large grants is obtained.
 - Explore possibilities of training in impact/knowledge exchange gathering and evaluation.
- Research and Teaching
 - Examine the possibilities for the organisation and provision of teaching to be adapted to provide both research time and connect to research.
 - Consider the inclusion of professors within UG and PGT teaching to enhance the research basis of teaching and reduce the hierarchy between lecturer/senior lecturer colleagues and professors.
- Review of the review process itself
 - There are ways the review itself could be improved:
 - Evaluate whether (or when) it can return to be in person
 - Include wider representation of colleagues across the Department
 - Include some detail on the centre activity within the Department.