



ITÄ-SUOMEN
YLIOPISTO

Department of Social Sciences

Operations Manual
Version 1.0
26.9.2016

1 (12)

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Operations Manual 1.0



CHANGE PAGE

This is the change page of the Quality Manual of the Department of Social Sciences. The changes made to the Quality Manual are recorded on it.

Versions 0.1–0.N of the manual are working drafts only.

Version	Approved by	Date	Type of change	Changes applied
0.1	non-approved	26 February 2010	Preparation of the Quality Manual	
0.2	non-approved	26 March 2010	Quality Manual prepared	Complemented and corrected based on the feedback from the departmental meeting and the persons in charge of the academic subject.
1.0	Head of Department	6 April 2010	Approval of the Quality Manual	Complemented and corrected based on feedback from Sirpa Suntioinen for internal audit.
2.0	Head of Department	30 September 2010	Approval of the Quality Manual	Complemented and corrected based on feedback from Sirpa Suntioinen. Corrections made to several sections of the Quality Manual.
2 January	Head of Department	27 October 2011	Updating the Quality Manual	Complemented and corrected to correspond to the department's current situation. Changes to sections 1.3, 1.9, 2.2 and 2.3.
2.2	Head of Department	19 November 2013	Updating the Quality Manual	Complemented and corrected to correspond to the department's current situation. Changes to sections 1.3., 2.2 and 3.2.2.11.
3.0	Head of Department	17 October 2014	Updating the Quality Manual	Corrected and abridged in accordance with the faculty's instructions (Pekka Kuusela, quality manager, Kuopio Campus).
1.0	Head of Department	26 August 2016	Updating the Quality Manual	Name changed from Quality Manual to Operations Manual, information updated, corrected and abridged in accordance with the faculty's instructions, attached to the faculty's Quality Manual (Pekka Kuusela, quality manager, Kuopio Campus).



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1 MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

1.1 The mission and vision of the department

The mission statement of the Department of Social Sciences adheres to the scientific university tradition, in which teaching is based on research. The research conducted by the department is internationally acclaimed and socially significant, and it focuses on social questions and development challenges typical of Eastern Finland. The department's scientists participate analytically and critically in social dialogue.

The department operates actively in modern innovation systems, participates in producing innovations needed in working life, and promotes targeting research data to meet the needs of working life. The research conducted at the department is free, open and public. Its results are intended equally for scientists, citizens, authorities and NGOs.

1.2 The operating environment of the department

Research

The department's focus areas of research are as follows:

- the social dimension of welfare
- upbringing, education and work
- migration, multiculturalism and border
- theory, targets and working practices of social work
- gender.

Education

Undergraduate education provides the students with a strong discipline-based education and the abilities needed for the diverse and changing tasks in working life that require expertise in social sciences, as well as eligibility for postgraduate studies in their major subject. The education is of high quality, both pedagogically and with regard to content. It develops internationality and a dialogue between theory and practice, while also preparing students for working life. Information technology is utilised in a variety of ways in the approach to teaching.

The teaching at the Department of Social Sciences emphasises both all-around education in social sciences and the specialisation based on the research carried out at the department in tandem. The teaching focuses on action learning so that strong theoretical thinking can be transferred into real operating environments during the thematic studies.



The Department of Social Sciences is a part of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Business Studies. The department is a multidisciplinary unit comprising five major subjects on two campuses. The department offers Bachelor's and Master's degree education in Social Sciences in the following major subjects:

Social pedagogy (Kuopio Campus)

Social psychology (Kuopio Campus)

Social work (Kuopio Campus)

Sociology (both campuses)

Social and public policy (both campuses; the focus in Kuopio is on social policy. Those who have started their studies on 1 August 2011 or later cannot choose social and public policy as their major subject at the Kuopio Campus.)

The major subjects of those admitted to social sciences in Joensuu in the general admissions process are sociology or social and public policy. The bachelor's seminars for the academic subjects are held by major subject. By choosing a seminar, the students also choose the major subject for their bachelor's degree. The Department of Social Sciences gives more detailed instructions for entering the major subject in the student register.

The major subject of those admitted to study social sciences in Kuopio in the general admissions process is social psychology, social pedagogy or sociology. The bachelor's seminars for the academic subjects are held by major subject. By selecting a seminar, the students also select the major subject for their bachelor's degree. The Department of Social Sciences gives more detailed instructions for entering the major subject in the student register.

The department offers the following master's degree programme in English:

Border Crossings: Global and Local Societies in Transition (Joensuu Campus, together with the Department of Geographical and Historical Studies)

In addition, the department offers education in connection with studies of sociology of education at the Philosophical Faculty; it is also responsible for teaching philosophy in cooperation with the Law School, as well as teaching methodology for the whole faculty at the Kuopio Campus. The department participates in producing several multidisciplinary study modules as well as multidisciplinary teaching networks. The department also provides scientific postgraduate education in all of its major subjects and offers specialist social worker training.

1.3 Internal organisation

At the Department of Social Sciences, the basis of administration is that all of the staff and students participate in preparing and planning the activities and their principles, as well as in decision-making. The department's functions are developed continuously, and the staff members are encouraged to strengthen their expertise and their knowledge of the university's administration. The aim in management is to ensure that the staff has opportunities to participate.



Head / Deputy Head of Department

The Head and Deputy Head of Department together are responsible for the strategic development of the whole department, implementing the decisions, and the tasks assigned by the University of Eastern Finland's Administrative Regulations, the financial management regulations, as well as other regulations. They are also responsible for the general administration based on a mutual division of labour.

The administrative division of the department into academic subjects

Administratively, the Department of Social Sciences is divided into academic subjects:

Social	pedagogy
Social	psychology
Social	work
Sociology	
Social and public policy	

The academic subjects consist of their staff and students. The academic subjects of sociology and social and public policy cover the staff and functions of both campuses.

1.4 Department administration

Working groups can be established at the department in order to investigate and prepare various issues that cross the boundaries between academic subjects and disciplines and promote a multidisciplinary approach.

The administrative system, which is based on inclusion, is implemented by holding the following meetings at the department:

1. General departmental meetings, in which the whole staff from both campuses, as well as representatives of subject associations, participate together. In the general meetings, strategic issues of the department, and evaluation of the activities and their development are discussed. General meetings are arranged at least twice a year. The general departmental meetings are convened by the Head of Department.
2. Campus-specific general departmental meetings, which are held separately at the Joensuu and Kuopio campuses, nevertheless have the same agenda. The campus-specific general meetings are held as needed. Representatives from subject associations also participate in them. The campus-specific meetings are convened by the Head of Department and the Deputy Head.
3. Academic subject meetings, which primarily discuss issues related to the functioning and development of the academic subject as well as its internal division of labour. The academic subject meetings can also be campus-



specific if they discuss practical issues. As a rule, representatives of subject associations and other students majoring in the subject are invited into the academic subject meetings. The academic subject meetings are convened by the person in charge of the academic subject.

4. Meetings of the persons in charge of academic subjects, in which issues are discussed that are common to the department's academic subjects as well as those related to the internal division of labour and developing the teaching. The meetings of the persons in charge of academic subjects are convened by the Head of Department and the Deputy Head.

5. Meetings of working groups across the borders between academic subjects, in which issues related to the working group's assignment are discussed. The chair of the working group acts as its convener.

In meetings in categories 1–4, the secretary is one of the department's amanuenses or secretaries. The secretary draws up meeting memos of the meetings.

The working groups prepare the final reports. Depending on the task of the working group, the report is discussed either at a general departmental meeting, a campus-specific general departmental meeting, an academic subject meeting, or a meeting of the persons in charge of academic subjects, or the staff is informed about the report.

Strategic stakeholders also include external funding organisations, such as the Academy of Finland, Tekes, the Workplace Development Programme TYKES, Sitra, foundations, and ministries. The department maintains good relationships with these partners in cooperation by participating in common events, negotiating about issues related to cooperation, and offering its own expert assistance.



2.1 Staff and students of the department

The department's staff consists of employees hired with basic and project funding. The staff members hired with basic funding include:

13 professors, 2 of whom are fixed-term
17 university lecturers, 3 of whom are fixed-term
4 university teachers, 2 of whom are fixed-term

The staff hired with project funding includes researchers working under various titles, persons oriented towards leading research and persons assisting in research. There are also grant researchers working at the department's facilities.

Staff from the Administration Service Centre has been placed at the department: 4 amanuenses and 4 secretaries.

The department has approximately 1,300 students pursuing an undergraduate degree in social sciences.

2.2 Premises, equipment, software and equipment registers

The Department of Social Sciences operates on the Joensuu and Kuopio campuses in the following buildings:

Site and campus	Joensuu Campus	Kuopio Campus
Building (street address)	Metria (Yliopistonkatu 7)	Snellmania (Yliopistonranta 1 E)

Information on the premises currently in use and their areas and rental expenses is available from the university's Facilities Management database.

The equipment of the Department of Social Sciences consists mainly of various pieces of IT equipment. The university's IT Centre is responsible for the maintenance and repair of IT equipment, software, and infrastructure.

The general principles and instructions of the University of Eastern Finland are observed in procurement. Furniture, equipment and software purchases are recorded in the register of fixed assets in accordance with the instructions.

3 FUNCTIONS

3.1 Key functions: strategic leadership and performance management



The strategic management of the Department of Social Sciences is based on the department's internal strategy work, performance assessment and management reviews. Strategy issues are discussed at the general departmental meeting. The strategy work is led by the head of department and the deputy head. The strategy of the Department of Social Sciences is based on the general strategy of the University of Eastern Finland and the special focus areas set by the Faculty of Social Sciences and Business Studies.

A Strategy Day is held at the department 1–2 times per year; there, the contents of the strategy and the department's performance are studied in addition to the focus areas, goals and methods of the operations, and the realisation of the strategy is monitored from the perspective of the university's indicators.

3.2 Core functions

3.2.1 Research

The focus areas of the department's research include the social dimensions of welfare, upbringing, education and work, migration, multiculturalism and borders, research into social work, and gender studies. The focus areas and research strategy have been discussed in more detail in the Research Strategy 2015–2020 of the Department of Social Sciences (document available at the department's website).

3.2.2 Education

At the Department of Social Sciences, master's degree studies consist of major subject studies and minor subject studies, or only of major subject studies. Social work as a major subject also provides the professional qualifications of a social worker in accordance with the legislation on education in social work: the Government Decree on University Degrees (794/2004, sections 15, 24 and 32, entered into force on 1 August 2005) and the Decree concerning Degrees in Social Sciences (245/1994, additional section 4a, entered into force on 1 August 1999).

Book exams in the department's major subjects can usually be taken either during general book exams or as electronic exams. In the academic subject of philosophy, book exams can only be completed as electronic exams. The responsibility of checking the exams has been divided between the teachers of philosophy at the Department of Social Sciences and the Law School.

3.2.2.1 Students' practical training



The persons in charge of training in the academic subjects or the amanuenses at the department are responsible for the training that is a part of the advanced studies in the academic subjects of general social sciences. The purpose of the training is to familiarise students with working life and increase their employability. The students draw up a report on the training.

Practical training in social work is based on the Decree concerning Degrees in Social Sciences (245/1994) and the Government Decree on University Degrees (794/2004). Social work students complete three separate practical training periods, for which the lecturers of the academic subject are responsible. A separate description has been drawn up on the practical training in social work; it specifies the goals, content and scope of the training as well as the details related to its implementation (see the website of the Department of Social Sciences). A separate training agreement is also drawn up for social work, for which the teachers in charge of social work are responsible.

3.2.2.2 Teacher education in social sciences

The students at the Department of Social Sciences have the opportunity to apply for studies to become qualified as teachers in social subjects. Applications are accepted in the spring. Students starting their teacher education have the opportunity to complete a part of the teaching practice related to their studies in the department's academic subjects, if it is appropriate for the student's future career. The School of Applied Educational Science and Teacher Education at the Joensuu Campus is responsible for organising teacher education.

3.2.2.3 Scientific postgraduate education at the department

The UEF Doctoral School consists of the university's doctoral degree programmes, which are responsible for providing scientific postgraduate education. The Doctoral School has been organised into doctoral programmes since 2013. All doctoral students are selected to attend a specific doctoral programme, and they pursue doctoral studies according to the requirements of the programme.

It is possible to complete scientific postgraduate degrees in all of the major subjects at the Department of Social Sciences. Starting from 1 August 2015, the Department of Social Sciences is involved in three multidisciplinary doctoral programmes:

- Doctoral Programme in the Past, Space and Environment in Society
- Doctoral Programme in Social and Cultural Encounters
- Doctoral Programme in Welfare, Health and Management

At the department, it has also been possible to complete postgraduate studies in the form of a professional licentiate degree (social work). In the future, this education will no longer be postgraduate education leading to a degree; instead, it will be implemented as separate specialisation studies (79 ECTS credits) completed alongside active employment. Students admitted before the change will complete a professional licentiate degree in the old format (120 ECTS credits).



4 ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF OPERATIONS

The department receives the information needed for assessing and developing the operation from the existing systems and indicators, which are also used by the University of Eastern Finland and the Faculty of Social Sciences and Business Studies.

Assessment of operations at the Department of Social Sciences becomes a cyclical process in which the assessment of the results of core functions is connected to the quality management system and staff development.

4.1 Assessment and development of research

The quality and performance of the research conducted at the department is assessed based on the information in the SoleCRIS research database. The indicators used by the Faculty of Social Sciences and Business Studies and the University of Eastern Finland are used as performance indicators in research.

Research is developed generally via the work on research strategy, in which the department's whole staff participates. By assessing the research quality and analysing research indicators, the quality, impact and effectiveness of research can be studied. More general operating methods that can be transferred to future research projects are sought through the assessment of individual research projects.

4.2 Assessment and development of education

Assessment and development of education is defined as a key task of the faculty council in the regulations of the University of Eastern Finland. At the Department of Social Sciences, education is assessed and developed within the department, in cooperation with the campus units (sociology), as well as the other departments of the faculty with regard to the common education at the faculty. The staff in charge of academic subjects is responsible for the education in their subject and its development; they organise discussions with the teaching staff and representatives of the students.

4.3 Social interaction feedback system

The most important specialist tasks noted in the SoleCRIS research database as well as the research project listing maintained by the Administration Service Centre are used as the social interaction feedback system.



4.4 Management reviews and processing complaints

The management review is always held at the start of the year. The review assesses and reviews the realised activities at the department based on information gained from various indicators, complaints and feedback systems. The department's development needs and targets are defined through analysis, and plans are made to meet these challenges. The department administration and quality managers are responsible for collecting the material for the assessment. The university's common indicators are used in the assessment as applicable, until the department's own strategy work progresses to the level of indicators.