Appendix 1. Research Focus and Recruitment Policy of the Department of Rural Tourism

The aim of the Department of Rural Tourism is to build a strong research activity that strengthens its reputation and that of Hólar University, nationally and internationally, cultivates teaching and disseminates new knowledge for the profession and society.

Focus of Research

The department focuses the following fields of study:
1. Tourism Studies with a focus on sustainability and responsible tourism, especially in rural areas
2. Event management
3. Tourism and hospitality management

The Department of Rural Tourism acknowledges academic freedom and the responsibility of scientists. Different approaches in research and studies, subjects and presentation of the research results are respected and valued.

Research within the department is both applied, meeting different demands and settings of the community and industry at any given time, and academic, through research projects aimed at strengthening basic knowledge about tourism in Iceland.

The department aims to take a lead in its fields of studies by actively participating in academic discussions and teaching, take the initiative to organizing meetings and conferences and participate in national and international workshops and conferences.

The department aims to boost research activity by promoting increased research collaboration within the department. Efforts should be made to make research and research output visible, both within the academia and in the community (public engagement). The aim is also to make the impact of the department's research, on the industry and society, visible at all times.

It is the department’s goal to increase its application rate to research funds/competing funds, in order to enhance research activity within the department. Emphasis is placed on national and international research collaboration and increased participation of graduate students in research projects.

Within the department, the focus is on strengthening the integration of research and teaching, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The department will ensure that mentors receive support and training. A mentoring agreement should be signed between the supervisor and the graduate student, cf. the school's rules. Graduates are participants in the academic environment of the department.
The department aims to strengthen collaboration with foreign universities, by faculty exchanges, guest lectures and guidance of masters and doctoral students.

Permanent faculty should set themselves research goals in the annual employee interview with the head of department. The goals should be related to the job description and employment proportion. When assessing whether, and to what extent, faculty members have fulfilled their research obligations, their set research goals should be taken into account.

The department aims at utilizing funds in a targeted manner, with good management of research projects. Procedures for the management and implementation of research projects and instructions to the project leader will be prepared, i.e. regarding various expenses of research projects, recruitment of assistants, students etc.

Recruitment and appointment policy

In order to strengthen research at the Faculty of Rural Tourism at the Hólar University, an effort should be made at the department to employ internationally outstanding scientists in associate, assistant and full professors’ positions. As a rule, it is required that assistant professors, associate professors and full professors have completed a doctorate degree.

The Faculty has the following hiring policy to support its research priorities (see above):

New faculty members should be
   a. A specialist in Tourism Studies and/or Service Management (2019)
   b. A specialist in Event Management

Infrastructure and facilities

The Department of Rural Tourism aims at creating good working facilities for its faculty, for research, ensure access to libraries and electronic information databases. In addition, a good library owned by the department/university should be pursued, one which is updated regularly based on the focus of the department’s activities at each time to ensure that faculty have access to the tools necessary for research in the social sciences, such as various research data processing programs and other programs, as needed.

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