

UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG 2010

*One of the biggest and liveliest universities
in Europe with high quality research and education.
A creative and exciting meeting place for many disciplines.
In the centre of the city and in close contact with society.*



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

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Foreword

University of Gothenburg was founded in 1954. Over the years it has continued to grow and develop, not least as a result of the incorporation of other institutes of higher education. Today, after fifty years of rapid growth, we are a university with rich and varied research and education. Many students are attracted to the University and research in many subject areas is of an excellent quality. The Nobel Prize for Medicine in 2000 is an example of this.

University of Gothenburg is now looking to the future, to the year 2010. In order to continue to develop and progress, a broadly agreed strategic profile of the University was published in 2003. The current mission statement is built around the strategic profile and the tradition that University of Gothenburg represents.

The purpose of this mission statement is to build a framework for the future of the University and to inspire those who work and study here. It is the responsibility of the faculties and the departments to turn the ambitions expressed in this document into practical reality.

I hope that we will be able to work together to develop our university further. We share a common responsibility to reach the high goals that we have set ourselves in this statement for the future.

Gunnar Svedberg

Gothenburg 2 October 2004

One university - many traditions

Its location in the centre of a large city by the sea gives University of Gothenburg its special identity. This will be true as much in 2010 as it was at the end of the 19th century, when higher education in Gothenburg started. The proximity to the life of the city vitalises the University and contributes to the formation of its special character.

The Gothenburg Institute of Higher Education, from which University of Gothenburg developed, was founded to unite independent study with practical work for the good of society. The connection between academic knowledge and time-tested experience, and more recently the vision of a city centre university has united University of Gothenburg with the rest of society: trade and commerce, industry and culture.

The character of the University has been strengthened over the last few decades as vocational and artistic institutes of higher education have become part of the University.

Integrity and excellence

Independence and freedom in relation to the forms and aims of its research is an indispensable principle for a university. We can best meet the needs and demands of society when our activities are morally and intellectually independent of political, ideological and commercial interests, and when they are characterised by a critical and enquiring attitude.

For a university academic excellence and a critical search for the truth is the essence of its activities. A constant 'why?' is the most important intellectual tool. Academic excellence is best served by strict integrity and by an internal democratic organisation. The work must be carried out according to high ethical and moral principles.

The excellence of research and teaching is a university's most valuable asset – it must always be preserved and developed. Attainment goals must be based on established demands for quality. The long term generation of knowledge is the basis of our role in society.

University of Gothenburg must further strengthen its interdisciplinary work across traditional subject boundaries. Creative cooperation between different disciplines will improve our ability to answer scientific and artistic questions.

Open minds, open doors

University of Gothenburg aims to combine the search for academic excellence with a high degree of openness to society at large. It must address the problems of today as well as tomorrow's and in line with its traditions take advantage of society's time-tested experience.

University of Gothenburg must be and be seen to be open, actively in touch with its environment, available and welcoming, ready to cooperate unconditionally with anyone outside the academic world. It must be part of important networks, regionally, nationally and internationally.

We want to combine constructive cooperation with the surrounding world with a critical analysis of trends in society and in trade and industry. It is our responsibility to identify and address important questions in contemporary life. Publishing scientific findings must be a natural part of our activities, and to promote life-long learning for everybody.

Working for progress in society

We are proud that University of Gothenburg has been very successful in its research and teaching in combining excellence with practical and useful results in the service of society. The future will require further cooperation across different academic disciplines – the development of society will continue to demand unified knowledge.

The various and diverse activities which have come together by joining different institutes of higher education to University of Gothenburg facilitate rewarding meetings between different knowledge areas and different scientific outlooks.

The University must be an asset even for those who traditionally have had no contact with academic life. Students from all groups in society must be given the chance to study on our programmes. At University of Gothenburg it must always be what you do that matters, not who you are.

A dynamic place to meet and work

We must actively follow the development of technology and take advantage of the opportunities to search for, spread and store the information made possible by technology. At the same time, the role of internationally established forms of knowledge exchange, not least the discussion seminar, must be strengthened.

We can all contribute to making University of Gothenburg an exciting meeting place for teachers, researchers and students. Learning is part of a personal context for each individual, and its significance is influenced by individual experiences. But learning is also collective; it is created in meetings between people.

Libraries are important meeting places for people in higher education. But new places must also be created across the traditional subject and professional boundaries.

For teachers, researchers, administrators and technicians, as well as for students, University of Gothenburg must be an attractive, stimulating, creative place of work, with equal opportunities for everyone. This demands a good working environment, and a possibility for all employees and students to grow and to realise their potential.

Where research and education meet

The link between research and teaching and the dialogue between researchers and students is fundamental to the long term growth of the universities' generation of knowledge. Research cannot be prioritised before teaching and vice versa. Our ambition is to aim for excellence in teaching that is animated by research as well as in research that is inspired by the students' commitment and interest.

It is our fundamental conviction that a university must develop procedures and methods of work where research and teaching are linked. If such a connection is absent the research carried out by universities risks losing its importance and the students' involvement may diminish.

We must all make sure that the University does not become an education factory. Instead we must develop a creative environment for learning and research which will encourage an enquiring attitude in students which will have a positive influence on the development of society.

Keeping pace with the city - and the world

University of Gothenburg is different from most other universities because its activities are concentrated in the centre of the city. We believe that the University can make even better use of its location than it has so far. At the same time the University must make further demands on the city and help improve conditions for students.

The close proximity to the life of the city centre does not run contrary to the increasingly important internationalisation of various global educational and research networks. The position of University of Gothenburg in the centre of Scandinavia also facilitates educational and research cooperation across national boundaries.

The constantly shifting perspective between the local and the global extends the boundaries for our research and makes our students better equipped to deal with the problems and challenges of the future in cooperation with others. An international university is better equipped to contribute to local debate and influence the local community.

University of Gothenburg has an important role to play in the development of a sustainable society. Commitment to environmental issues is a strong feature of the research in many of our faculties. The awareness of environmental issues must also influence the way we conduct our activities internally as well as externally.

A major and exciting European university

Breadth and variety are two recognised characteristics of University of Gothenburg. With eleven faculties we are certainly seen as a university of many disciplines with great opportunities for synergies between different research groups and with considerable choice and variety for our students in combining different subjects in their studies.

It is the responsibility of the management as well as of individual members of the University to take advantage of this variety and breadth in order to strengthen the quality of teaching and research. We will then be one of the major universities in Europe, and one of the most dynamic and exciting.

Background

The document The University of Gothenburg 2010 has been produced on the request of the Vice-Chancellor. The document is partly inspired by the vision from 1997 but rests on a broader ideational platform. This document replaces the vision from 1997.

The strategic profile laid down by the Board in June 2003 serves as an important point of departure for the document:

Midtown - midstream
Open minds, open doors
Many disciplines in creative interaction
Where research and education meet
Committed to a sustainable society
A major European university

The explanatory statement regarding the profile and the surveys on which it is based are available in a separate publication, *Identitet och image* from May 2003.

The document has been discussed with the Faculties, and all University of Gothenburg staff members and students have been given due opportunity to submit feedback in writing and to attend an open hearing. In addition, the student representatives have been invited to present their views at a separate meeting.



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