

# Impact assessment 2019

September 2020

# Defining impact

Impact assessments are commonly regarded as important tools to demonstrate and understand the value of academic activities, in a broad sense. As part of many research communities, and a provider of high-quality business education, there is no doubt that the scholarly and educational activities carried out at the UiA School of Business and Law have a certain impact. For the sake of internal and external stakeholders, however, it is important to both trace and visualise the impact of the School's activities. Hence, the impact assessment at the School of Business and Law includes examples of the impact of research, as well as educational and outreach activities.

There seems to be no clear definition of impact. One general definition from the European Science Foundation (ESF) says that: "Impact can be described as consequences of an action that affects people's lives in areas that matter to them" (ESF, 2012). On research, the Australian Research Council (ARC) defines impact increasingly in social terms, saying that "Research impact is the contribution that research makes to the economy, society, environment and culture beyond the contribution to academic research" (ARC, 2019). Furthermore, The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), part of UK Research and Innovation, regards research impact as twofold (ESRC, 2020):

- **Academic impact** is the demonstrable contribution that excellent social and economic research makes in shifting understanding and advancing scientific method, theory and application across and within disciplines
- **Economic and societal impact** is the demonstrable contribution that excellent social and economic research makes to society and the economy, and its benefits to individuals, organisations and/or nations.

Based on this, the School of Business and Law chooses to value both the scientific and the societal

consequences of our activities. We look at how our research and other intellectual output contribute to the academic fields we operate in, as well as the difference our research, teaching and other activities make for businesses, government entities and the wider society.

## Our approach to impact assessment

The School's mission informs the way we define impact. Our mission statement is: "We co-create knowledge by applying international, innovative, and responsible perspectives." We implement this mission by educating responsible professionals with a global mindset and innovative attitude, as well as by doing relevant research that allows us to collaborate with strong international partners. We also implement this mission by interacting closely with businesses, state institutions and civil society to develop and disseminate knowledge.

The concept of co-creation captures the mode of cooperation in many of these relationships. We see co-creation as the development of knowledge in close partnership with our stakeholders, and we place emphasis on creating knowledge that is useful and relevant for our partners and the wider society. The close relationship with external actors makes impact more likely.

In our strategy, we are aiming to build a distinct profile in the Norwegian market for business education as a university-based and innovative business school, offering attractive international and practice-oriented experiences to our students. This work is informed by our vision, which is to be regionally connected and globally engaged. We are constantly working to further strengthen our close cooperative relations with regional actors and to further develop our ties to international partners.

Given this framework, we are compelled to narrow the broad understanding of impact down to one where we aim for strong impact in academic fields associated with the terms "innovative", "international" and "responsible".

In this effort, our key stakeholders are students, academic peers in relevant scholarly fields, and businesses and government entities. It is particularly important to contribute positively to entities residing in our own region. However, entities at national and international levels are also relevant.

We bring several high-quality inputs to this effort: We are part of a modern and well-funded public university that offers faculty members designated time to do research and to engage with stakeholders. Our strong portfolio of faculty members has over the past few years been bolstered by the recruitment of several high calibre researchers. The high number of applicants to our courses ensures that the students who enter our school are bright and motivated. Finally, an important asset is our long-standing and collaborative relations with several business and government stakeholders in our region and beyond.

## Our system for measuring impact

When measuring research impact, one can draw a distinction between outputs, outcomes and impact of research. Output is often defined as publications and/or patents, which can generate outcomes like competence building or innovative ideas. Impact would be more overarching consequences like higher employment, better health, increased competitiveness and productivity, or improved sustainability, to mention some. In this report, we will report not only on impact, but also on outputs and outcomes, based on the assumption that the latter will, with time, lead to impact.

Time is indeed a challenge when reporting on impact. Our activities may have direct and immediate impact, or they may unfold later and be more long term. Activities and visible impact from last year receive priority in our annual impact assessment, but we will also use the opportunity to highlight impact stemming from activities prior to the year of reporting. The impact assessment follows a set structure where we report on how our activities have had positive effects, changes, or benefits for our stakeholders in

areas associated with innovative, international, and responsible dimensions. It ends with a presentation of some basic metrics related to our graduates and to our research. The impact assessment is intended to serve as a supplement to the Quality Report, which is submitted by the School to the university board every spring.

Given our emphasis on co-creation, it is very important for us to trace the impact of our intellectual contributions in general, and particularly the impact of our research. We believe that the best way to investigate the impact from our activities is to identify the interplay between our intellectual contributions, including teaching, and economic, social, and political processes. This is done through in-depth qualitative case examples. Each annual impact assessment includes one or more such cases. In this year's report, we present our impact through three cases:

- **Innovative:** Innovative teaching methods on ethics and academic writing for business students
- **Responsible:** Criticism from the UiA School of Business and Law impacts draft bill
- **International:** Portrait of one of the world's most cited researchers on microfinance

We complement this in-depth section with highlights from last year, and we draw on both qualitative and quantitative methods when generating the necessary data for this. Three sources are particularly important here: a) The university runs a large-scale quantitative survey of recent graduates that offers a number of indications on how our educational offering has had an impact on our graduates, as well as the impact they generate in their new professional roles; b) the annual development conversation between each faculty member and their managers places emphasis on recording and discussing the employee's research, engagement and outreach; c) we have a regular newsletter that the management issues to all employees, where most of our prominent research and outreach activities are noted. This makes the newsletters from one full year a valuable source to consult.

# Mission and impact

## Innovative

The School places strong emphasis on innovation. Around twenty percent of our faculty members have innovation or entrepreneurship as one of their main areas of specialisation, and we have three centres in this field: Centre for Advanced Studies in Regional Innovation Strategies (RIS), the Centre for Entrepreneurship, and the newly established Centre for Crowdfunding Research. We offer a master's programme in Innovation and Knowledge Development, and in the autumn of 2020 we are launching SHIFT Entrepreneurship, a master's programme that aims to enable students to see and act on the entrepreneurial possibilities that stem from today's societal challenges.

For the previous year, we note considerable activity in this field, from which we expect impact in the time to come. Some examples include:

- In 2019 our school received NOK 3,4 million of a total of NOK 12,5 million from the Research Council of Norway for the three-year research project "BATMAN: Lithium ion BATteries - Norwegian opportunities within sustainable end-of-life MANagement, reuse and new material streams". The project is a cooperation with regional and other selected companies, the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) and the Institute for Transport Economics. The School's team consists of Associate Professors Stina Torjesen and Magnus Hellström and PhD Research Fellows Benedikte Wrålsen and Terese Birkeland.
- The project "Serious games in higher education" received NOK 4,5 million from the Norwegian

Agency for International Cooperation and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education (DIKU) for the period 2019-2022. Project leaders are Assistant Professor Knut Erik Bonnier and Associate Professor Magnus Hellström, and the project idea is to teach students project management through computer games that simulate a real work situation.

- The Department of Working Life and Innovation received NOK 2 million in funding from Aust-Agder Development and Competency Fund for a project called "Innovation policy for big societal challenges". The funding will continue for five years, given satisfactory progress. Participants from the School are Professors Arne Isaksen, James Karlsen and Michaela Trippel, Researcher Jan Ole Rypestøl (Ph.D.), Ph.D. Research Fellow Clare Hildebrandt and Research Assistant Maren Songe Eriksen.
- In February 2019, one of our students, Fredrik Bringager, was one of the founders of UiA's first student consultancy company, and the first in Norway within the fields of industry and technology. In less than a year the company Young Industrial Innovators has a turnover of almost NOK 1 million and is sought after by several of the biggest companies in Southern Norway.
- In June, Ph.D. student Benedikte Wrålsen was invited to The Business and Industry Climate Conference and a workshop on circular economy. The hosts of this event were Prime Minister Erna Solberg and Minister of Climate and Environment Ola Elvestuen, gathering actors from different business sectors. The aim of

the workshop was to suggest joint actions between the government and businesses within the circular economy field to obtain better resource exploitation, reduce negative environmental consequences and take a big step closer to a low-carbon society.

- UiA Nyskaping helps innovative employees and students to realise their ideas. In 2019 two of the student projects received NOK 1 million each from the Research Council of Norway to further develop their ideas. The company "Equiconnector" has developed an online platform for finding horses available for hire at any given time. The other company, "Sentient Finance", uses artificial intelligence to predict bankruptcy for businesses. Docent Terje Heskestad has been actively involved as supervisor for the EMBA students behind this company.
- On April 5th, CoLAB, an arena for cooperation among students, employees, businesses, and the public sector, was opened as part of the Centre of Entrepreneurship. CoLAB is a cross-disciplinary entity focusing on social innovation through co-creation and the sharing of knowledge.
- Associate Professor Eirin Mølland was invited to participate in one of four working groups in relation to the "ChildrenYouth21" strategy, commissioned by the Ministry of Children and Families. The strategy will lay the foundation for a national effort for research, development, and innovation for the benefit of vulnerable children and youth.



## Case example: Business students need better skills in writing and ethics

### The economists John A. Hunnes and Torunn Skåltveit Olsen believe there is a need for more than business knowledge to prepare business students for future challenges.

– There are several good reasons why we should focus on ethics and writing. One of them is the fact that the labour market demands expertise on sustainability. Companies wish to employ people who can reflect critically on their activities, and who may also formulate their thoughts in writing. Ethics should be in the backbone of future business graduates, says Associate Professor John A. Hunnes at the UiA School of Business and Law.

He reminds us that the buzzword “sustainability” also concerns the business discipline.

– Whether you are investing or running a business, you need to keep sustainability in mind, and constantly consider ethical dilemmas related to green development. Employers are interested in employees who are able to reflect and make good ethical decisions. At the same time, we see that the students want to work for environmentally conscious companies that take ethical responsibility. This is something higher education institutions must take seriously, and that is exactly what we have done, Hunnes says.

### Ethically conscious business students

Together with Associate Professor Torunn Skåltveit Olsen, he has reorganised the examination, the

teaching and the syllabus in ethics and corporate social responsibility (CSR).

– For years, ethics has been a small part of the business administration education. Typically, this is something that is addressed towards the end of the study programme, he says. Hunnes and Olsen chose to introduce ethics already in the first semester. The aim was partly to incorporate ethics as a fundamental component of the business discipline, and not only a supplement to it.

– We want ethics to form a basis that the students take with them throughout their studies. An example of the improvements we did to the teaching, was discussing current ethical issues and reflecting together with the students. The assignments we gave the students were often based on recent newspaper articles, Hunnes says.

The teaching went from one-way communication to seminars based on dialogue and reflection. The lectures were recorded on video, and individual efforts and written assignments from the students were required. The course “Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility” now consists of three elements: academic writing, ethics, and CSR in a Norwegian and international context.

### In search of the optimal teaching method

Hunnes and Olsen are still trying to find the optimal teaching method, and they have gained many experiences along the way. In an early phase of the

reorganisation of the course, the need to teach the students more academic writing became clear.

– All writing skills we as academics and business economists take for granted, need to be learned, for instance the use of sources, to be able to discuss a problem and to apply theory when writing. We included this in our course, as the students did not learn it elsewhere. In collaboration with the library, students are now offered six hours of plenary lectures on academic writing, Olsen says.

And that is not all. One of the most comprehensive tasks the two economists have taken on, is to provide thorough feedback on the students’ assignments.

– The most ambitious part of what we do is that we provide individual feedback to our 350 students. We receive them in groups of three and spend 45 minutes on each group. This allows us to discuss writing, business, and ethical reflection with each and every student already during their first semester. That makes a good ballast for the students to take with them, Hunnes says.

The faculty management has been supportive of the changes – a decisive factor, according to Hunnes:

– We have received the necessary support all the way, he says.

### Current assignments

Andreas Mosvold Salvesen is one of the students who has completed the new ethics course.

– We did not get many assignments, but the ones we got were very up-to-date and thus relevant and interesting for us students. The current topics led to constructive discussions during group work, he says.

The student believes that a strengthening of the ethics field will give future business graduates more legitimacy.

– We are growing up in a world where we need to learn to take better care of both the environment and people. Therefore, it is important to stress how we as business graduates may contribute. I also believe that the legitimacy of business economists is strengthened by the fact that we know more about ethics, he says.

### A prize for the reorganisation

Every year, the University of Agder awards an education prize for innovative teaching and development projects. The education prize for 2018 went to Hunnes and Olsen for their efforts regarding ethics and academic writing for business students. The prize winners do not laze about but are constantly developing the course. They have already published one article about their pedagogical method internationally, and they plan to write an additional four articles, two of which in collaboration with colleagues from the engineering sciences and pedagogics environments. Two books are also underway.

– We plan to publish a scholarly book each during 2020. My book will be about ethics and economics, while Torunn is concentrating on CSR, Hunnes says.

# International

The School puts a strong emphasis on international dimensions. Over twenty percent of our staff work on themes that are strongly international. Most researchers collaborate with international partners and we publish most of our work through international channels.

A considerable share of our activities is directed at emerging markets. We study management and economics themes in an emerging market context, we educate students from emerging markets and we collaborate with prominent educational and research institutions in emerging markets. Finally, the chief editor of the European Journal of International Management (Inderscience, UK) and the International Journal of Emerging Markets (IJoEM, Emerald) is a full-time participating faculty member at our school. We also have one participating faculty member that serves as Area Editor of IJoEM.

Below we highlight some prominent examples of activities from the previous year, some having impact on research, others hopefully leading to future societal impact:

- The Center for Research on Social Enterprises and Microfinance (CERSEM), led by Professor Roy Mersland, has initiated a large new project with research on what drives the performance of savings groups. The project is sponsored by the FAHU foundation. CERSEM has gotten access to the SAVIX database covering 250 thousand groups worldwide, and their first output was a descriptive report on the content in the database.
- Research performed by CERSEM was mentioned in important international newsletters, which allows for greater impact on policy:
  - A governance paper written by Professor Leif Atle Beisland, Professor Roy Mersland and Daudi Pascal Ndaki (Ph.D.), published in the world's leading non-profit journal Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly was mentioned in one of the most read newsletters on microfinance, from Financial Access Initiative (FAI).

- A paper about microfinance institutions and their missions, written by Professor Mersland, his colleague Professor Ariane Szafarz from Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management and their joint Ph.D. candidate Samuel Nyarko, and published in Journal of Business Venturing Insights, was mentioned in the European Microfinance Platform newsletter.
- Professor Ilan Alon wrote an opinion piece in Norway's leading business newspaper Dagens Næringsliv addressing the challenges related to intellectual property rights in China.
- In September, our school opened a Center for Crowdfunding Research. The Center is led by a team of passionate researchers standing at the forefront of alternative finance research, while being actively engaged in raising awareness, education, and public debate.
- Associate Professor Iris Nguyen Duy at our Department of Law was elected Deputy Secretary General of the International Association of Constitutional Law. This opens for further networking within the field of law.

In our Impact Assessment report from 2017 (for the year 2016) we presented our research on microfinance. At the School, this field was introduced in 2004 by the then Ph.D. student Roy Mersland. It has since developed into today's Center for Research on Social Enterprises and Microfinance, CERSEM, with worldwide impact. Roy Mersland is a professor since 2012, and in 2019 he was listed as the world's fourth most cited researcher on microfinance. In this report we present an interview with Professor Mersland.

## Case example:

### – To lend someone money is to place your trust in them

**Professor Roy Mersland is one of the world's most cited researchers on microfinance. – The most important citations are from colleagues who live where microfinance is in use, he says.**

– I entered the academic sphere with substantial practical experience. Together with the Norwegian Mission Alliance I started a bank in Ecuador, and I did all kinds of duties there. So, when I began to do research in this field, I knew where to get good data, Mersland says.

Roy Mersland, a professor of International Business, was in 2019 mentioned in a study that presents the most influential researchers on microfinance. Mersland was listed as the world's fourth most cited in this field, across all branches of science.

#### Maybe the world's biggest banking market

– I know several of the others on the list, and I have co-published with some of them. My research focuses on the running of microfinance institutions, something that is relevant for many other researches to use and cite. Microfinance may not be a big field in Norway, but it is maybe the world's biggest banking market, measured in the number of clients. Gradually, it is getting more attention from Western banks, and it is beginning to be commercially interesting to invest in, Mersland says.

He has published many scholarly articles about microfinance. The study that ranks him among the most cited, includes citations from all over the world, but some citations mean more to him than others.

– The most important citations are from colleagues who live where microfinance is in use, he says. I feel proud when I am cited in a master's thesis in Ghana, for example. That shows that my research reaches those countries that need it.

#### – High quality over many years

Mersland has been important in the development of microfinance research, Dean Kristin Wallevik proudly states:

– He has contributed with research of high quality over many years and is among those who set the research agenda in this field. It is very valuable for us to have a top ranked researcher within microfinance because it makes the School more visible internationally.

International Business is, and will continue to be, one of the UiA School of Business and Law's priority areas, of which Microfinance is a central part. We have established a Center for Research on Social Enterprises and Microfinance, which has become one of Europe's leading research centres in this field.

– Roy has been central in the building of a robust academic environment at our school, including several Ph.D. students in microfinance. The School has also established several cotutelle agreements with renown institutions to develop the field further, Dean Wallevik says.

#### From desperate to trusting

Microfinance has been brought to the Norwegian people's attention through the annual TV fundraising campaigns, which both in 2009 and 2019 focused on microfinance initiatives. Contributing in this way changes many people's perspective, Mersland thinks.

– A lot of development aid has focused on portraying the receivers of aid as desperate people. As a result, many poor people portray themselves as more desperate than what they really are, to receive continued support. In this aspect microfinance stands out. To lend someone money is to place your trust in them, and that trust has got to be earned. The recipients must have a plan for the money they borrow. In that way trust is built on both sides of development aid, Mersland says.

He grew up as part of a traditional Christian family in Southern Norway, and he says that to use his understanding of business to make life better for other people is a big part of the motivation for the work he is doing.

– When I was younger, I thought of development aid as an arena for priests or doctors, but I got really interested when I discovered that also as an economist I could contribute, Mersland says.

## Ph.D. programme in international business

International Business is the main specialisation of our Ph.D. programme. The dissertation consists of individual papers, and the students are encouraged to start writing papers and to participate in conferences at an early stage of the programme. The European International Business Academy (EIBA), is one of the

most important European conferences on International Business, and a particularly relevant arena for our Ph.D. students. As can be seen from the table below, many of the School's contributions to this conference are collaborations between Ph.D. students and their supervisors.



### Papers from faculty members of the UiA School of Business and Law at the 44<sup>th</sup> Annual EIBA Conference 2019

Paper	Author(s)
Gender Issues and Dynamics in Crowdfunding Across Different Cultures DVDB Symposium: 8th Danny Van Den Bulcke Doctoral Symposium	P. Serwaah
International Board Membership and Performance in Hybrid Organization: Does an Insider CEO Matter? IBR PDW: International Business Review Paper Development Workshop	T. W. Sommeno
Cross-country Study of Behavioral Intentions of McDonald's Consumers JIBS PDW: Journal of International Business Studies Paper Development Workshop	M. C. Henriquez Parodi
A Cross-country Study of Behavioral Intentions of McDonalds Consumers PS 1: Plenary Poster Session I	M. C. Henriquez Parodi <sup>1,2</sup> , I. Alon <sup>1</sup> , M. Mason <sup>2</sup> <sup>1</sup> University of Agder, Norway <sup>2</sup> University of Udine, Italy
Pandering to Politicians: A Multiple Agency Perspective on State-owned Enterprises in Emerging Markets JWB/JMS PDW: Journal of World Business/Journal of Management Studies Paper Development Workshop	I. D. Apriliyanti
Gender Inequality and Lending to Women: The Moderating Effect of Internationalization C 11.7: CSR, Informal Institutions and Stakeholder Reactions in Host Countries	S. A. Nyarko
The Role of Organizational Culture in Multinational Companies and its Contribution to Job Burnout PS 1: Plenary Poster Session I	M. M. Velasco
Donated Equity, Subsidized Loans, and the Governance of Social Enterprises PS 1: Plenary Poster Session I	M. Hudon <sup>1</sup> , S. A. Nyarko <sup>1,2</sup> , A. Szafarz <sup>1</sup> <sup>1</sup> Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium <sup>2</sup> University of Agder, Norway
Uncovering the Success of Minority Chinese Entrepreneurs: The Role of Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurial Orientation on SME Performance C 1.3.9: Knowledge, Learning and International Entrepreneurship	R. Virgosita <sup>1,2</sup> , T. Randøy <sup>2</sup> <sup>1</sup> Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia <sup>2</sup> University of Agder, Norway
The Joint Impact of International Board and Insider Chief Executive Officer on Performance in Hybrid Organizations C 1.4.2: International Governance	T. W. Sommeno
Word of Mouth: A Bibliometric Co-citation and Co-word Analysis PS 2: Plenary Poster Session II	C. Andersen

## Responsible

The School places considerable emphasis on themes associated with responsibility. We work with and understand responsibility in broad terms. This includes how businesses relate to and uphold their obligations vis-à-vis society; sustainability and the way climate change and resource scarcity matter for business; prudent and accurate management accounting, and sound financial investment strategies. Furthermore, our understanding includes the way businesses and citizens act responsibly by understanding and upholding national and international law. Using this broad conceptualisation, we find that over one third of our faculty members work on responsibility related issues. We have a master's programme in Accounting and Auditing, a bachelor's programme in Law, an executive education course on sustainability and considerable emphasis on ethics and sustainability across our study programmes.

Below we highlight some examples of impact from the previous year:

- In 2017, Professor Hans Christian Garmann Johnsen from the department of Working Life and Innovation, together with Professor Emeritus Hans Grelland from the Faculty of Engineering and Science, made the tv series "Philosophy of Science". Professor Johnsen got the idea in relation to his teaching of international Ph.D. students. The series was broadcasted on national television (NRK2) in November of 2019.
- In 2019 Professor Ellen Katrine Nyhus became a columnist in Dine Penger ("Your Money"), which is Norway's largest magazine on private economy. Her contribution is in the field of behavioural economics. In October, she was also the keynote speaker at the Behavioural Science and Investor Education Conference in Rio de Janeiro.
- In November, our student internship arrangement in Norway and emerging markets was presented in the regional newspaper Fædrelandsvennen. Professor Stein Kristiansen was interviewed, and representatives from Skagerak Maturo, one of the companies offering internships to our students in Kristiansand, emphasized the value of the cooperation.



## Case example: The Ministry of Education and Research sends draft bill for further consideration after criticism from the UiA School of Business and Law

### Background

In 2003 the Norwegian parliament reached a historical settlement regarding kindergartens, affirming that all families should have the right to a place in a kindergarten for their children.

Since then, the increase in private kindergartens has led to an almost full kindergarten coverage nationally, as well as the development of a quality and a diversity that would hardly have been possible without the initiative from different private actors. Almost all children in the relevant age group attend kindergarten; half of them in private institutions.

Because of the high coverage, actors who wish to enter the kindergarten sector or increase their market share, now need to buy existing kindergartens.

Reports show that private kindergartens take out little dividends and that profits to a large extent are reinvested in the companies. However, when selling a kindergarten, the owners may realize their capital. This has led to extensive media coverage on so-called "welfare profiteers" who enrich themselves through the sale of kindergartens. The Ministry of Education and Research wishes to improve the regulations for private kindergartens so that they adjust to the current situation.

### The issue and the consequences

Geir Haaland, study programme manager for the master's programme in Accounting and Auditing, assistant professor, and a state-authorized public accountant, reacted to the draft bill in the spring of 2019. The main problem was that the Ministry suggested to increase the transparency of each private kindergarten's accounts, by demanding that all private kindergartens be organised as separate legal entities, i.e. limited companies.

The draft bill would lead to extensive bureaucratisation and huge expenses for private kindergartens, in the order of magnitude of NOK 100 000 annually per company and over NOK 100 million annually for the society.

The implications of the draft bill would be that all private kindergartens in Norway would have to do separate accounting, present audited financial statements, establish an internal control and a board,

and have an annual meeting, which would all require resources spent on meetings and remuneration. In addition, formal agreements would have to be signed between all companies in the same group.

Of today's 3 000 private kindergartens, 30-40 % would have to reorganize. This would result in an annual cost of NOK 80-120 million; money that could otherwise be spent on renovations, services, and other things to the benefit of the children.

To address this issue, Assistant Professor Haaland and Dean Kristin Wallevik submitted a consultative statement to the Ministry of Education and Research to point out this problem. In addition, Haaland wrote a contribution about the issue to Norway's leading business newspaper, Dagens Næringsliv, which referred to his views in the editorial.

After this, Haaland got a reply from the then Minister of Education and Integration, in the form of a reader post in the same newspaper. The Minister addressed the benefits of the proposal and wondered where Haaland and the UiA School of Business and Law had got the numbers from. Haaland replied that the calculations were made from information given in the Ministry's consultation paper.

In his reader post to the Minister, Haaland did also elaborate on an alternative proposal, which he means will safeguard transparency and control without inflicting unnecessary costs on the kindergartens. Based on the views of the UiA School of Business and Law and others, the Ministry commissioned a report on the possibilities that lie in the extended use of the existing reporting system for the kindergarten sector, with the aim of finding alternative solutions.

### The way forward

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the process has been halted. The Ministry says that when they resume work on the bill, they will regard the issue "in a different light"

The fact that our consultative statement was cited several times, both in newspaper articles and contributions, and in the report request, shows that the input from the UiA School of Business and Law helped shed light on the flaws of the draft bill and added useful knowledge to the process.

# Alumni portraits

## Bachelor's and master's programmes

### Beate Skretting



**Position:** Mayor of Grimstad municipality  
**Studied:** Bachelor's programme in Auditing, 2003

In 2019, Beate Skretting was elected mayor of Grimstad municipality for the period 2019-2023, after three periods as a representative for the Conservative Party in the municipal council. After graduation from UiA up until she assumed office as mayor, she worked both in the private and public sector with accounting and auditing.

- In my previous jobs I applied a lot of the competency I gained through the auditing studies. The law subjects did also give me useful background knowledge for my tasks. Some assignments were of an investigating character,

and my education provided me with a broad academic basis for handling different professional challenges.

**In her current office, she is still making use of her education.**

- Being mayor is very varied and interesting. In many contexts I have good use of my background in business and accounting. It is motivating to be able to use my knowledge and experience at work, even though the office as mayor also entails a wide spectrum of other tasks. No two days are alike!

Skretting has good memories from her time at UiA.

- I chose my studies based on pure interest. It worked well to take my first two years in Grimstad, and the last year in Kristiansand. Commuting was easy, the facilities were good, and it was always nice to be on campus!

### Tharald Torset Lundvall



**Position:** Adviser at Ungt Entreprenørskap Agder  
**Studied:** Master's programme in Innovation and Knowledge Development, 2016

Tharald Torset Lundvall works at Junior Achievement Agder (Ungt Entreprenørskap Agder), a non-profit organisation that promotes entrepreneurship in education.

- We use several different methods and offer programmes that schools can implement in their teaching. I work primarily with upper secondary schools, and I feel lucky to be able to assist pupils and teachers with the founding of youth companies. The pupils are offered the possibility of founding, managing, and closing down a company within one school year.

- Establishing a good cooperation with the schools is a comprehensive task, and it requires a good dialogue with both the school owner, the school management, as well

as the teachers. We also involve representatives from local businesses and organisations in our activities. In other words, we interact with many different stakeholders, which is really interesting!

**For Lundvall it was easy to choose his educational path.**

- In many ways I feel lucky that I knew from an early stage what I wanted to study. I started working in a bookstore at the age of 15 and I chose the "service and transport" education programme in upper secondary school. There my interest in marketing was roused, and I chose to take a bachelor's degree in marketing. I was an active student and was offered a part-time job at Junior Achievement Agder upon graduation. Thereafter, the natural choice for me was the master's programme in Innovation and Knowledge Development at UiA.

**Lundvall finds his education very relevant for his current job.**

- I definitely apply knowledge and competencies that I acquired during my master's studies. I gained useful hands-on competency, as I spend much time working with development of ideas in schools, but I also got a bigger perspective that I have benefited a lot from. The master's programme in Innovation and Knowledge Development does not only address the individual entrepreneur, but it has a regional focus on innovation. That has given me a better understanding of my organisation's role, and the work we do with entrepreneurship in education in Agder.



## Ph.D. programme alumni

Our Ph.D. programme in International Management commenced in 2006. To facilitate further high-quality research for our Ph.D. candidates upon completion of their degree, the School offers the possibility of keeping their UiA affiliation as an “associated researcher”/Ph.D. alumnus. To be granted such affiliation, alumni must be working at a business school or similar, and document plans for joint research with an UiA faculty member. Affiliation is granted for two years at a time and gives alumni access to the UiA IT systems and funding for conference participation or guest researcher visits to UiA. In return, the candidate should, in cooperation with at least one UiA staff member, publish at least one article annually in an international, recognized journal (preferably AJG/ABS journal), where the UiA affiliation is listed alongside the candidate’s institution of employment.

The Ph.D. Alumni arrangement helps us keep track of where our graduates are working.

Below we present the most updated overview. Two aspects may be noted. One group of graduates typically contribute to business schools across Scandinavia through their teaching and research. Another group of students are tied to our work on emerging markets. We recruit many students from emerging markets, who can undertake studies at our school on a range of different funding schemes. Most of these graduates take on central positions as researchers at leading universities in their home countries. During the last years, the School’s Ph.D. programme has expanded. We currently have nearly 50 Ph.D. candidates enrolled from a broad range of countries.

### All alumni from the Ph.D. programme at the UiA School of Business and Law

Graduates	Current positions
Roy Mersland (2009), Bjørn Tore Flåten (2011), Rotem Shneur (2011), Torbjørn Bjorvatn (2018), Stephen Zamore (2018) and Stine Øyna (2019)	School of Business and Law, University of Agder, Norway
Virginija Vigil (2012)	Sales Manager in Dillard’s, Arizona, USA
Neema Mori (2012)	Dar es Salaam University, Tanzania
Ashatu Kachwamba Kijaji (2013)	Deputy Finance Minister in Tanzania
Muhajir Abubakary Kachwamba (2013), Emmanuel Chao (2014), Mursali Milanzi (2014), Daudi Pascal (2017) and David Ndikumana (2018)	Mzumbe University, Tanzania
Dan Ayebale (2014)	Uganda Christian University, Uganda
Gibson Munisi (2014)	Ardhi University, Tanzania
Pamela Chidiogo Izunwanne (2015)	Founder and director of private company, USA
Xie Qunyong (2015)	Wuchang Institute of Technology, China(?)
Burak Tunca (2015)	School of Economics and Management, Lund University, Sweden
Jens Ørding Hansen (2015)	Nordland Research Institute, Bodø, Norway
Anthony Andall (2016)	St. George University, Grenada

Pontus Engstrøm (2016)	Private business, Norway and affiliated researcher at the House of Innovation, Stockholm School of Economics, Sweden
Irfan (2017)	National University of Science and Technology, Pakistan
Lisa Whitehead (2017)	Entrepreneur, Kristiansand, Norway
Carla Assuad (2018)	Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway
Muluneh Dato (2018)	Local university, Ehtiopia(?)
Bandula Galhena (2018), Amila Sirisena (2018)	University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka
Ziaul Munim (2018)	University of South-Eastern Norway
Jan Ole Rypestøl (2018)	NORCE Research Institute, Norway
Jann Goedecke (2018)	Statkraft, Germany
Kwame Djan (2018)	KNUST School of Business, Kumasi, Ghana
Ann Camilla Schulze-Krogh (2018)	Agder county administration, Norway
Karen Landmark (2019)	NCE iKuben, Arendal, Norway
Boyke Purnomo (2019) and Indri Apriliyanti (2019)	Gadjah Mada University, Indonesia
Espen Solheim-Kile (2019)	Kruse Smith, Kristiansand, Norway
Marianne Berge (2019)	Entrepreneur, London, Great Britain

### Ph.D. public defenses in 2019

Candidate’s name	Dissertation title
Indri Dwi Apriliyanti	“Elite power, institutional voids, and politics in state-owned enterprises in Indonesia”
Boyke Rudy Purnomo	“Essays on Entrepreneurship and Creative industries”
Karen Landmark	“Enabling corporate sustainability transition: The case of Norwegian process industry”
Espen Solheim-Kile	“Incentives and goal alignment in Public-Private Partnerships”
Stine Øyna	“Essays on Born Global Evolution”
Marianne Berge	“Taming the beast? The role of multinational corporations in small regions developing innovation policy based on unique competence of soft skills: The case of the Agder region in Norway”

# Key parameters

In this section, we present some basic metrics and tables that illustrate impact stemming from our core activities: research, education, and outreach/public events. Some of these metrics are direct evidence of impact, while others are more indirect. They demonstrate strong links and contact with key stakeholders, strengthening the possibility of generating positive effects on society.

We start by providing an overview of impact on scholarly communities before we present metrics related to educational impact and outreach.

## Impact from scholarly activities

In this document, we mainly report on the output of research. In academia, there still is, and should be, high emphasis on publications in high ranked journals and citations. One could argue however, that the School's publications in high impact journals on level 3 and 4 in the Academic Journal Guide (AJG), as well as at Cristin level 2, represent a scientific impact. In turn, such publications might also lead to societal impact. There will most likely be even more focus on outcome and impact of research in the years to come. This may especially be relevant in future applications for research grants.

### Research output and quality

One way to illustrate the quantity of the School's research is to look at the average number of yearly publications per employee (converted to the equivalent of Full Time Faculty). This is a basic indication that our research gets published and, therefore, contributes to academic communities. In addition, there is a presentation of the top-tier journal articles at the AJG-list and in the Norwegian database Cristin. Below, there is also a brief description of the AJG-list and Cristin.

#### Research output<sup>1</sup>

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Research level and profile</b>					
Publication points	41,6	59,1	78,2	75,5	111,13
Points per full time faculty (FTE)	0,63	0,93	1,22	1,05	1,30
Total number of publications	59	71	93	98	89
Number of journal articles	41	51	72	68	72
Journal articles (%)	69 %	72 %	77 %	69 %	81 %
Journal articles level 2 in Cristin system (%)	19 %	13 %	13 %	21 %	27 %
Journal articles in AJG (ABS) (%)	59 %	47 %	57 %	65 %	65 %
Articles AJG-level 3/4/4* (%)	27 %	18 %	25 %	22 %	28 %

<sup>1</sup> The following categories of publications are included: Journal articles, anthology articles, monographs. All departments at the School are included, also the Department of Law.

### The Cristin system

Cristin is the research classification system used in the Nordic countries. Typically, journals such as Journal of International Business Studies, International Business Review, and Journal of Business Research are listed at the highest level, i.e. level 2, alongside high-ranking journals from other fields, including for example Science and Nature. It is important to display the results in the Cristin system for two reasons: While the AJG list by and large captures well which journals are particularly relevant for our institution, there are still some themes that are not well covered in the AJG list, especially law related subjects. Moreover, the Ministry of Education measures the School's performance in the Cristin system, where our score in Cristin has an impact on future government funding. We therefore need to keep track of, and reward, a strong performance on the Cristin ranking.

### The AJG list

Most high calibre business schools use the British Academic Journal Guide (AJG) as their reference, also referred to as the ABS-list. The AJG is a guide to the range and quality of journals in which business and management academics publish their research, with a range from 1 to 4\*, with level 3, 4 and 4\* defined as high quality publications. Below we include a description of the AJG levels<sup>2</sup>:

#### Level 4\* Journals of Distinction

Within the business and management field, including economics, there are a small number of grade 4 journals that are recognised world-wide as exemplars of excellence. As the world leading journals in the field, they would be ranked among the highest in terms of impact factor. The initial paper selection and review process would be rigorous and demanding. Accepted papers would typically not only bring to bear large scale data and/or rigour in theory, but also be extremely finely crafted and provide major advances to their field.

<sup>2</sup> <https://charteredabs.org/academic-journal-guide-2018/>

#### Level 4

All journals rated 4, whether included in the Journal of Distinction category or not publish the most original and best-executed research. As top journals in their field, these journals typically have high submission and low acceptance rates. Papers are heavily refereed. These top journals generally have among the highest citation impact factors within their field.

#### Level 3

3 rated journals publish original and well executed research papers and are highly regarded. These journals typically have good submission rates and are very selective in what they publish. Papers are heavily refereed. These highly regarded journals generally have good to excellent journal metrics relative to others in their field, although at present not all journals in this category carry a citation impact factor.

#### Level 2

Journals in this category publish original research of an acceptable standard. For these well-regarded journals in their field, papers are fully refereed according to accepted standards and conventions. Citation impact factors are somewhat more modest in certain cases. Many excellent practitioner-oriented articles are published in 2-rated journals.

#### Level 1

These journals, in general, publish research of a recognised, but more modest standard in their field. A 1 rating is a useful indicator in that it indicates the journal meets normal scholarly standards, including a general expectation of peer review. Papers are in many instances refereed relatively lightly according to accepted conventions. Few journals in this category carry a citation impact factor.

## Research quality

### Journal articles published in AJG listed journals, level 3 and 4, 2019

Author(s) <sup>3</sup>	Article title	Journal	CRISTIN level	AJG level
<b>Anna Alon</b> Andrea Mennicken Anna Samsonova-Taddei	Dynamics and Limits of Regulatory Privatization: Reorganizing audit oversight in Russia	Organization Studies	2	4
Katariina Juusola <b>Jouni Kimmo Alajoutsijärvi</b>	Revisiting Dubai's Business School Mania	Academy of Management Learning & Education	2	4
Sougand Golesorkhi <b>Roy Mersland</b> Rebecca Piekkeri Grigory Pishchulov <b>Trond Randøy</b>	The effect of language use on the financial performance of microfinance banks: Evidence from cross-border activities in 74 countries	Journal of World Business	2	4
Alexandra Frangenheim <b>Michaela Trippl</b> Camilla Chlebna	Beyond the Single Path View: Interpath Dynamics in Regional Contexts	Economic Geography	2	4
<b>Stephen Zamore</b> <b>Leif Atle Beisland</b> <b>Roy Mersland</b>	Geographic diversification and credit risk in microfinance	Journal of Banking & Finance	2	3
<b>Rotem Shneur</b> <b>Ziaul Haque Munim</b>	Reward crowdfunding contribution as planned behaviour: An extended framework	Journal of Business Research	2	3
<b>Roy Mersland</b> <b>Leif Atle Beisland</b> <b>Daudi Pascal Ndaki</b>	The Origin of Chief Executive Officers and Performance in Hybrid Businesses: The Case of Microfinance	Journal of Small Business Management	2	3
<b>Indri Dwi Apriliyanti</b> <b>Trond Randøy</b>	Between politics and business: Boardroom decision making in state-owned Indonesian enterprises	Corporate governance: An International Review	2	3
<b>Lars Oxelheim</b>	Optimal vs satisfactory transparency: The impact of global macroeconomic fluctuations on corporate competitiveness	International Business Review	2	3
Reggy Hooghiemstra Niels Hermes <b>Lars Oxelheim</b> <b>Trond Randøy</b>	Strangers on the board: The impact of board internationalization on earnings management of Nordic firms	International Business Review	2	3

Sougand Golesorkhi <b>Trond Randøy</b> <b>Roy Mersland</b> Oded Shenkar	The performance impact of informal and formal institutional differences in cross-border alliances	International Business Review	2	3
<b>Kalanit Efrat</b> Yoel Asseraf	A shift in perspective? The role of emotional branding in shaping Born Globals performance	International Business Review	2	3
<b>Roy Mersland</b> <b>Samuel Anokye Nyarko</b> <b>Amila Buddhika Sirisena</b>	A hybrid approach to international market selection: The case of impact investing organizations	International Business Review	2	3
<b>Salman Bahoo</b> <b>Ilan Alon</b> Andrea Paltrinieri	Corruption in international business: A review and research agenda	International Business Review	2	3
<b>Xingyi Li</b> <b>Valeriy Zakamulin</b>	The term structure of volatility predictability	International Journal of Forecasting	2	3
Martin Esch Benedikt Schnellbacher <b>Andreas Erich Wald</b>	Does Integrated Reporting Information Influence Internal Decision-Making? An Experimental Study of Investment Behavior.	Business Strategy and the Environment (BSE)	1	3
<b>Sangeeta Singh</b> Lola C Duque	Familiarity and Format: cause-related marketing promotions in international markets	International Marketing Review	1	3
<b>Leif Atle Beisland</b> <b>Roy Mersland</b> <b>Daudi Pascal Ndaki</b>	Influence of Ownership Type and CEO Power on Residual Loss: Evidence From the Global Microfinance Industry	Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly	1	3
Robert Hassink <b>Arne Isaksen</b> <b>Michaela Trippl</b>	Towards a comprehensive understanding of new regional industrial path development	Regional studies	1	3
Ricardo Rialti Lamberto Zollo Alberto Ferraris <b>Ilan Alon</b>	Big Data Analytics Capabilities and Performance: Evidence from a Moderated Multi-Mediation Model	Technological Forecasting and Social Change	1	3

3 Authors in bold are employed at or affiliated with the UiA School of Business and Law.

## Impact from educational activities

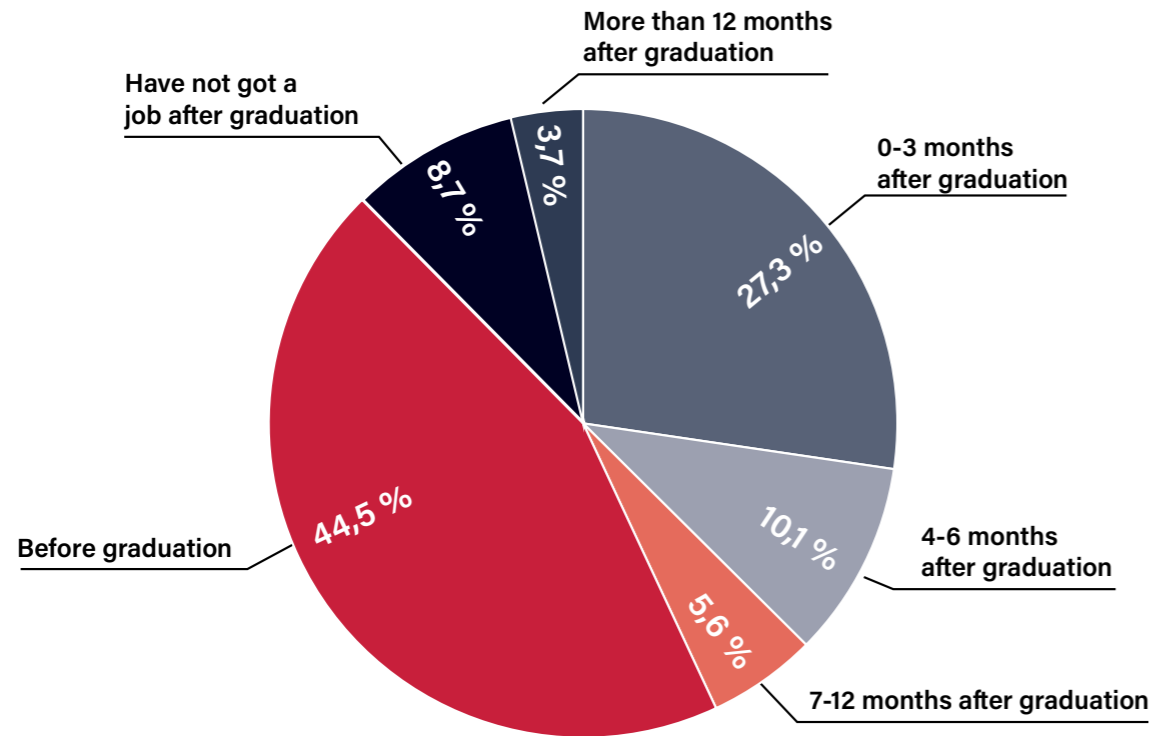
A large share of our impact on business and society comes through our graduates. We want our graduates to draw on and apply the advanced skills they have acquired as part of their education at our school in jobs that are, broadly, relevant to their education. Moreover, our mission compels us to stimulate the growth of responsible professionals with a global mindset and an innovative attitude.

UiA commissions a large survey every third year where graduates respond to a broad range of questions about their education and their subsequent career. In 2019, around 500 candidates graduated from the School of Business and Law since autumn 2016 responded to the survey, which gave us a 37 % response rate. Below we present the most relevant results.

### Survey results for School of Business and Law graduates (2019 survey)

#### When did you get your first job?

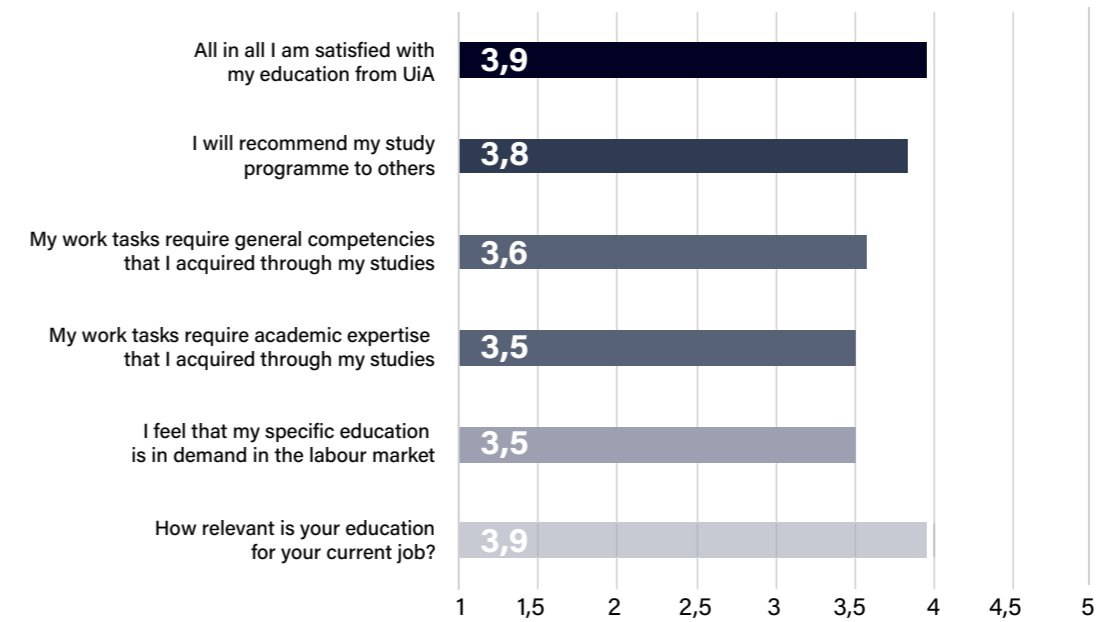
(Graduates who continue to study are excluded)



We note that our graduates are attractive on the job market. Almost 45 % of the respondents got a job before graduation, and within six months over 80 % were employed<sup>4</sup>. We are also pleased to note that our graduates to a high degree are satisfied with their study programme, and that they find it relevant to their current job.

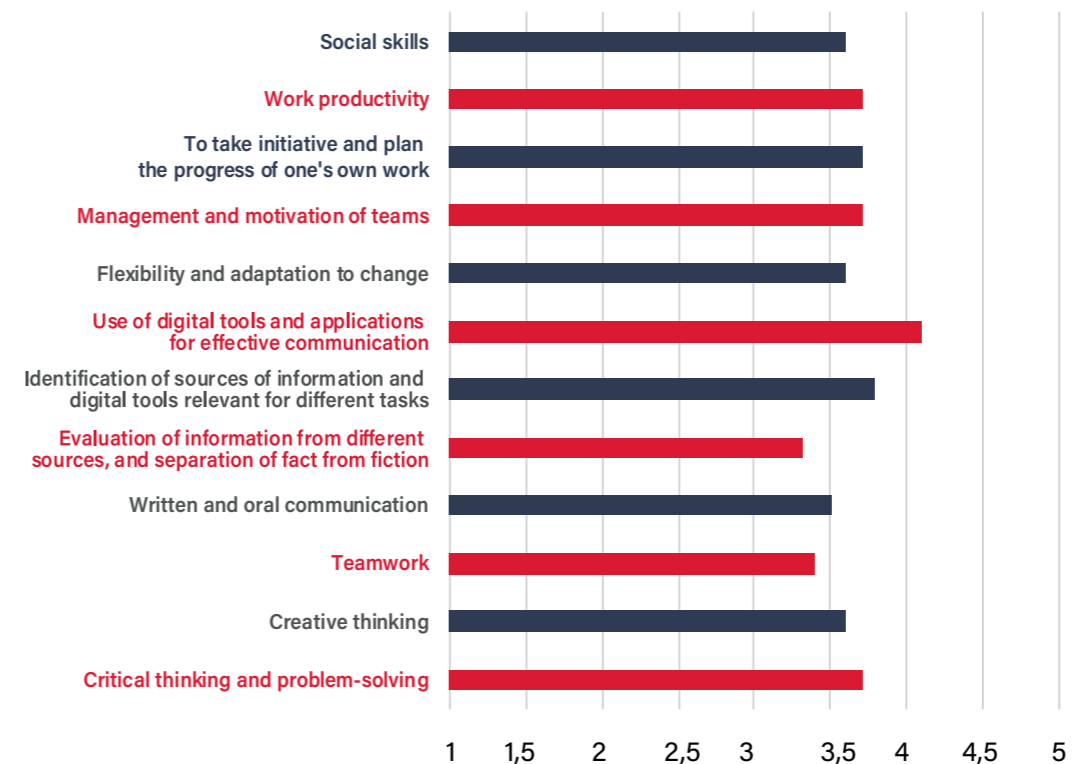
<sup>4</sup> Please note that the most recent cohort that was included in the survey graduated in June 2019, only four months before the survey was carried out.

### Assessment of study programme



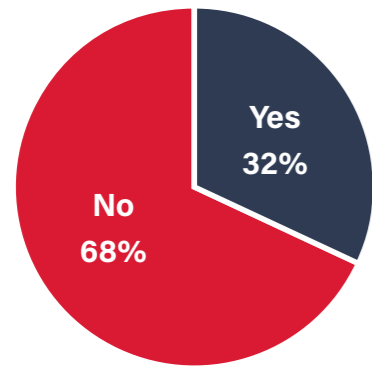
In the 2019 Candidate Survey, the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills were specifically addressed, and the graduates were asked whether they would have liked a stronger emphasis on these skills throughout their studies. We see that they have indicated a desire for more focus on all the skills, but the "Use of digital tools and applications for effective communication" stands out. As an increased focus on some elements may require a reduced focus on others, we must carefully assess what changes may be made while still staying true to our mission.

#### In light of the requirements in work life, do you think your study programme should have placed more or less emphasis on the following competencies? (3 = Just the right emphasis)

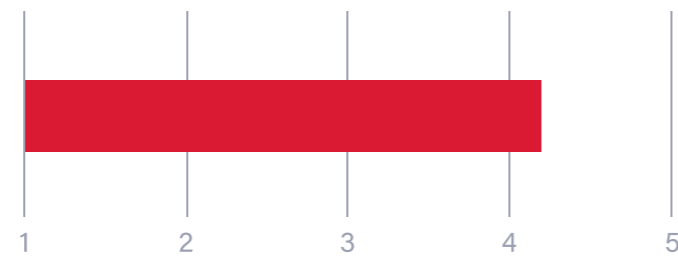


For the past years, the percentage of our graduates that have spent one or two semesters abroad on exchange has been around 20. However, over 30 % of the School's respondents to the 2019 Candidate Survey had been on exchange. We see that this group highly values the exchange experience as a positive contribution to their everyday working life. We are continuously working to increase the number of students going on exchange, and to enhance the quality of the exchange through strategic partnerships with selected institutions abroad.

Did you go abroad on student exchange (min. 3 months) during your studies?



How useful is your experience from the exchange for your everyday working life?

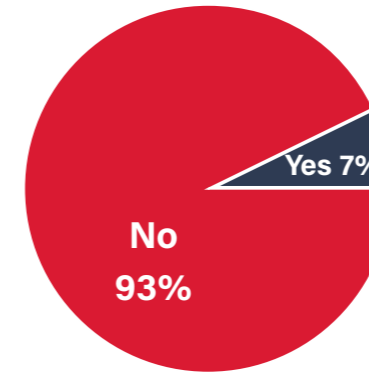


Since 2015 our school has invested much time and resources in the development and running of two internship offers for our master's students in Business Administration, in Innovation and Knowledge Management, and in Industrial Economics and Technology Management<sup>5</sup>. Until 2019, a total of nearly 20 % of our graduates from these programmes had carried out an internship in a Norwegian enterprise or in a Nordic enterprise in a high-growth economy. There is no doubt that the students who spend a semester abroad through this arrangement, acquire a deep understanding of international aspects of business. Interns both in Norway and abroad are also challenged to think and act responsibly when exposed to a real-life work situation.

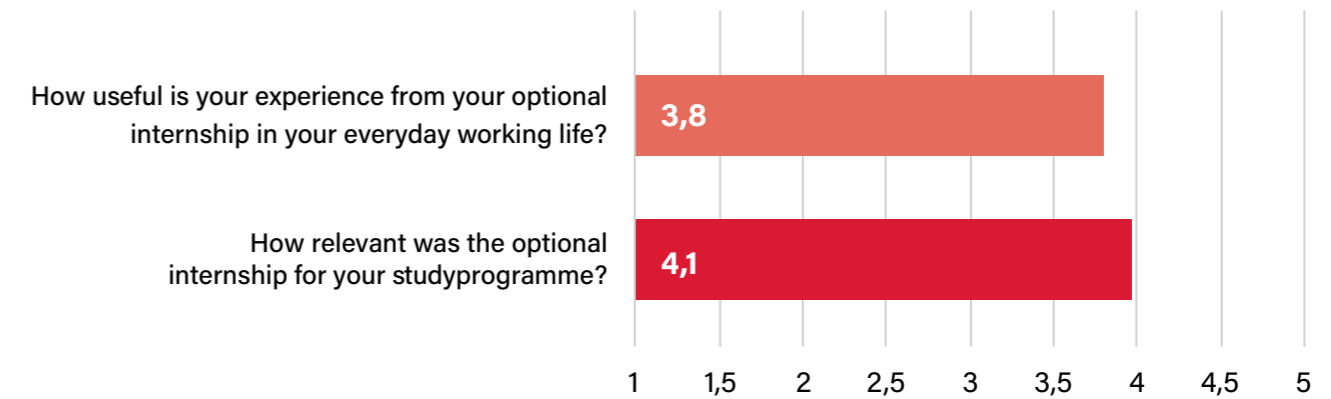
The number of respondents who carried out an internship is only 7 %, because bachelor's students who are not offered this possibility are also included. We are pleased to see that our graduates to a high degree find the internship useful in their current job, and that it was relevant to their education.

5 This programme is owned by the Faculty of Engineering and Science but run by the School of Business and Law.

Did you participate in an optional internship as part of your studies at UiA?



Assessment of optional internship



## Outreach

A large part of our faculty members are actively disseminating their research to the wider society, through channels such as newspaper articles, radio interviews and invited speeches at private businesses. For the year 2019, we count 216 such activities among our faculty members.

The School organises several public events each year. In addition to small-size, regular events, we also strive to attract and organise larger national and international conferences. Below we present a table summarising all major public events where the School served as lead organiser in 2019.

### All events open to the public in 2019

Formal events open to the public in 2019	Number of events
Breakfast seminars	8
Research seminars	9
Industry/business forums and conferences	2
Career days	2
Alumni events	4

### Breakfast seminars – an example

Since 2014, the School has organised a series of monthly breakfast seminars, open to the public. The seminars offer food for thought along with an unpretentious Nordic breakfast, and depending on the topic, actors from a variety of sectors attend.

A committee consisting of both young and more experienced researchers organises these seminars, with input from the rest of the School's faculty members. The format is one where one or more of our researchers present their research, and a representative from the working life presents the relevance of this research in a real-life context. Sometimes the presenters from the two arenas are working together on a project.

- The breakfast seminars are an exciting arena for debate and for the sharing of knowledge. They are professionally organised, with sound, lights, and equipment for presentation. The informal setting of the breakfast seminars provides a good starting point for dialogue, says Kristine Vigsnes.

She leads the project "New patterns – safe upbringing", which she presented at the breakfast seminar "Child poverty – What do we do in our region?" in November 2019. The topic led to an all-time high interest with more than 70 participants. The project involves a new and innovative methodology, developed by the municipality of Kristiansand, used in the efforts to assist long-term, low-income families. The UiA School of Business and Law and the research institute NORCE are involved in the project through the joint development of an evaluation project that will assess the impact of the methodology.

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