RQ20 PROJECT PLAN

FINAL VERSION 190508/MB, FS

RQ20 is tasked with providing a picture of how competitive the research of Lund University is in an international context. Above all, the evaluation is to look to the future by identifying strengths, weaknesses and development potential in all of the University's different research environments and in the organisations linked to these environments – for example, departments and faculties.

The aim of RQ20 is therefore to produce advisory documentation for the future, based on an analysis of the conditions within the University's different research environments. Furthermore, the conclusions drawn by RQ20 will provide recommendations on how the different management levels within the University (departments, faculties and central management), individually and collectively, can contribute to achieving ambitious quality objectives.

Why RQ20? – a general perspective

When Lund University carried out a large collective research evaluation for the first time in 2008, the aim was to obtain a picture of where the University was situated in the international research system and to identify how much of the organisation was operating at an internationally recognised level. The panels had the main task of reviewing quality as expressed in activities, publications, impact and plans for the future.

The main issue addressed by RQ08 is still relevant. It continues to be of crucial importance to understand where Lund University as a whole is situated in an international context and to what extent the University's researchers are visible within different research fields.

At the same time, other significant themes have emerged for a university that sees itself as a leading international university. One of these is concerned with the long-term safeguarding of quality. If the present situation is the only one assessed, the analysis becomes retrospective, as current publications and impact are the result of work that stretches 5-10 years back in time. It is therefore important to identify how well-equipped the organisation is for the future. An assessment of this kind is about evaluating plans for the future, forms of organisation, forms of funding and recruitment, as well as the way the University's formal management interacts with the organisation as a whole. Here, an additional component is the use of institutional comparisons to evaluate how the University as a whole is developing in comparison with relevant reference universities around the world.

A key aspect of RQ20 is therefore to review how well the University – as a whole and in its different parts – is equipped to achieve significant impact and to renew and develop its research.

More issues have arisen since the 2008 evaluation. Among these are the relationship and exchange between research and other tasks. Like many other large and broad universities, Lund University subscribes to the ideal of integrated environments where high-quality

research interacts with education and external engagement that is of an equally high quality. Research orientations and research quality must therefore be seen in light of the University's commitment to education and external engagement. Leading universities are not only expected to conduct high-quality research but also to contribute to the handling of different societal goals. An important aspect of RQ20 is therefore to highlight the relationship between quality within research on the one hand, and the University's societal networks, forms of external engagement and models for the funding and organising of larger problem-oriented activities on the other.

The task of the external assessors recruited for RQ20 is focused on **advice and constructive feedback** on the research environments' assessments of their current status and their plans and strategies for further development. The assessors/advisors are to highlight strengths and weaknesses and, particularly, the opportunities to reinforce quality and development potential in research.

RQ20 is taking place at the same time as Swedish higher education policy is becoming more and more focused on the development and assessment of quality enhancement at universities, primarily by the Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ) and with collective response from the Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions (SUHF). The frameworks that UKÄ and SUHF have produced indicate the importance of self-initiated inventories and evaluations. RQ20 therefore fulfils a clear role. In addition, RQ20 takes this ambition further. The aim is to highlight and critically evaluate the organisation's qualities and ambitions and how they can be further developed.

Strengthening the peer mechanisms: the why of RQ20

When the smallest components in an evaluation, called research environments in RQ20, are assigned the task of conducting a self-evaluation which is to be followed by external assessment and feedback, it leads to an increase in workload on top of an already crowded University workday.

How is an evaluation like RQ20 to be justified? Our starting point is that RQ20 is to benefit the reviewed activities: it should be possible for the evaluated environments (and the faculties and University management) to use the self-evaluation immediately for planning, operational descriptions and as documentation for funding applications both internally and externally. RQ20 is not a foreign element in the research environments; it is based on things the environments are already doing, but collects and structures them and opens them up to peer review by external advisors.

The aim of the evaluation is therefore, as already mentioned in the opening paragraphs, to create documentation for the future development of the organisation. Furthermore, the ambition is for RQ20 to lay the foundations for further work on analysis and feedback of the work on planning, recruitment and other central tasks in order to strengthen the research environments.

The instructions state that RQ20 is characterised by constructively focussed self-declaration conducted in an open process within the unit. The aim is to detail the positive aspects but also any negative experiences, difficult things and expectations. The advisors are expected to handle these confidences respectfully and to base their reports on these

self-descriptions and self-reflections, although they must also be able to base their work on more general standards and quality expectations.

Therefore, the aim is not to compare the research environments or to grade each one individually, instead, it is to contribute constructive observations on improvements and to recognise already accomplished achievements. Neither will RQ20 address direct financial benefits or distribution instruments. The aim is to detail the conditions at the different units and to draw conclusions at the panel level and at the university-wide level. Recommendations are to include how the different management levels, individually and collectively, contribute to achieving these goals. However, the issue of how the self-evaluations and the work of the advisors can be carried forward remains. One suggestion is that the advisors are to be tasked with producing a summary, for each research environment, with regard to the strengths, weaknesses and potential suggestions for reprioritisations, that is suitable as the basis for reports and follow-up in a few years' time, as a part of the management work at all levels.

Evaluating research environments: the how of RQ20

The aim is to base the evaluation on connected **research environments** (*Units of Assessment, UoA)* and to incorporate them and their activities in easily understood and informative formats. This means that an important task early in the RQ20 process is to identify these environments so that their activities can be detailed and analysed in a meaningful way. Research environments are defined as subjects, in some cases as departments or divisions, and in others as larger research groups or research themes.

We further assume that 35 large units - **panels** – will be defined, each containing 4-8 research environments with external advisors linked to each panel. The research environments and panels are described in more detail below.

What is a research environment?

The research environments are primarily defined by the faculties and may in some cases be large and broad (which may be hard to break down into smaller units) and in other cases clearly defined. The definition of the research environments is decided on by the faculties in consultation with the RQ20 office. We expect research environments to be homogenous and easily recognisable by those involved, but not too small. In several cases, the faculty-wide activities may also have an impact on the definition of the research environments.

What is a panel?

The term panel is used in this project description for both a group of linked research environments during the self-evaluation phase (35 in all) and for the same group of research environments during the external assessment phase. During the external assessment phase, five special panels are also introduced, please see below.

We estimate that the 35 research environment panels will ordinarily contain 4 to 8 environments and therefore approximately 20-25 members of teaching staff/researchers

per environment. This is seen as an average and different variations of size are natural and related to the faculties' operational models. The panels are ordinarily fitted into a faculty; however, in some cases there may be panels that are shared between faculties, for example, for subjects that cross faculty borders. Out of necessity, the panels are to be size-based, according to turnover and staff. We count on a turnover of approximately SEK 200 million per panel, corresponding to approximately 100-150 members of teaching staff/researchers per panel. Based on current statistics on the distribution of researchers (see table below), there would be 9 panels for the Faculty of Engineering, 8-9 for the Faculty of Medicine, 6 for the Faculty of Science, 3-4 for the Faculty of Social Sciences, 3 for the Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology, 2 for the School of Economics and Management, 1 each for the Faculty of Law, the Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts and MAX IV, while the organisations located in the Specialised Centres (USV) would be incorporated in relevant faculty panels. The final number of panels per faculty and their division in research environments is to be determined in consultation with each faculty management.

FO-personal	EHL	FV	HT	J	K	LTH	M	MAX IV	N	S	USV	TOT
Totalsumma	315	4	427	112	73	1205	1152	91	815	495	40	4726
Fraktion	0,07	0,00	0,09	0,02	0,02	0,25	0,24	0,02	0,17	0,10	0,01	1,00
Antal paneler av 35	2,33	0,03	3,16	0,83	0,54	8,92	8,53	0,67	6,04	3,67	0,30	35,02
AVRUNDAT	2	0	3	1	1	9	8-9	1	6	3-4	0	35,00

Research staff	LUSEM	Central Admin.	HT	Law	Arts	LTH	M	MAX IV	Sc.	SS	USV	TOTAL
Total amount	315	4	427	112	73	1205	1152	91	815	495	40	4726
Fraction	0.07	0.00	0.09	0.02	0.02	0.25	0.24	0.02	0.17	0.10	0.01	1.00
Number of panels out of 35	2.33	0.03	3.16	0.83	0.54	8.92	8.53	0.67	6.04	3.67	0.30	35.02
Rounded off	2	0	3	1	1	9	8-9	1	6	3-4	0	35.00

In the external evaluation phase, we expect 4-6 external advisors to be appointed per panel for the 35 + 5 panels. The chair of each panel's advisory group plays a key role and should have responsibility for the panel's collective report. The chairs should be recruited early on in the process based on their experiences of managing and/or evaluating large organisations (within universities, research councils, public authorities etc.). Well in advance of the site visit, the chairs should attend a presentation of the University's expectations, work methods, funding, and specific conditions in the Swedish research policy system etc. A document will be developed during 2019 and presented to the chairs and other members (panellists) in the advisory groups.

The advisory groups will be composed in such a way that they have reasonable coverage of the research environments' subject areas, but also for it to be possible to assess areas other than their individual areas of expertise – we propose that each research

environment's area should correspond to at least one panellist with expertise within the area.

We propose that each panel's advisory group is normally to be led by a Nordic researcher to ensure an understanding of the organisational and financial conditions of the Nordic countries. Otherwise, an even recruitment of panellists should be aimed for with a mix of Nordic, European and international representatives. A broader recruitment approach may be taken for the special panels, for which experience other than purely research-based experience is also desirable. Issues concerning conflict of interest, age and gender balance should also naturally be considered in the selection, and the RQ20 office will ultimately determine which individuals will sit on the panels (following proposals from the research environments).

Special panels

In addition to the 35 panels we identify five special panels that are tasked with highlighting specific thematic areas (see also the figure below).

One of these is ***organisation and leadership***. The working conditions in research environments are affected by the organisation and management within departments, faculties and the central administration, and an important task is to clarify what this interaction looks like and how it could be developed in the future. Lund University has swayed between different organisational ideals, from decentralisation to centralisation, specific solutions for new areas and an emphasis on line organisation. This panel has the task of reflecting on the University's organisation and structure, and the way in which it can be developed in the future as well as on research-relevant administration (for example on research services and publication analysis). This panel is also tasked with reflecting on how well Lund University as a whole compares to other universities with similar conditions with regard to funding and organisational management (for example, Copenhagen, Edinburgh, Heidelberg, Leiden).

The environments operate with cross-faculty and university-wide resources – among other things on specifically identified so-called ***large and interdisciplinary research environments***, but also on other initiatives to reinforce interdisciplinary collaboration. Lund University has a large number of such environments (for example, the so-called Strategic Research Areas, SRAs) and an important task is to highlight what the conditions for interaction between these and other research environments look like, how they are managed, organised and made possible. We propose that a specific panel be tasked with highlighting the role of large and interdisciplinary research environments and their interaction with the other research activities at the University.
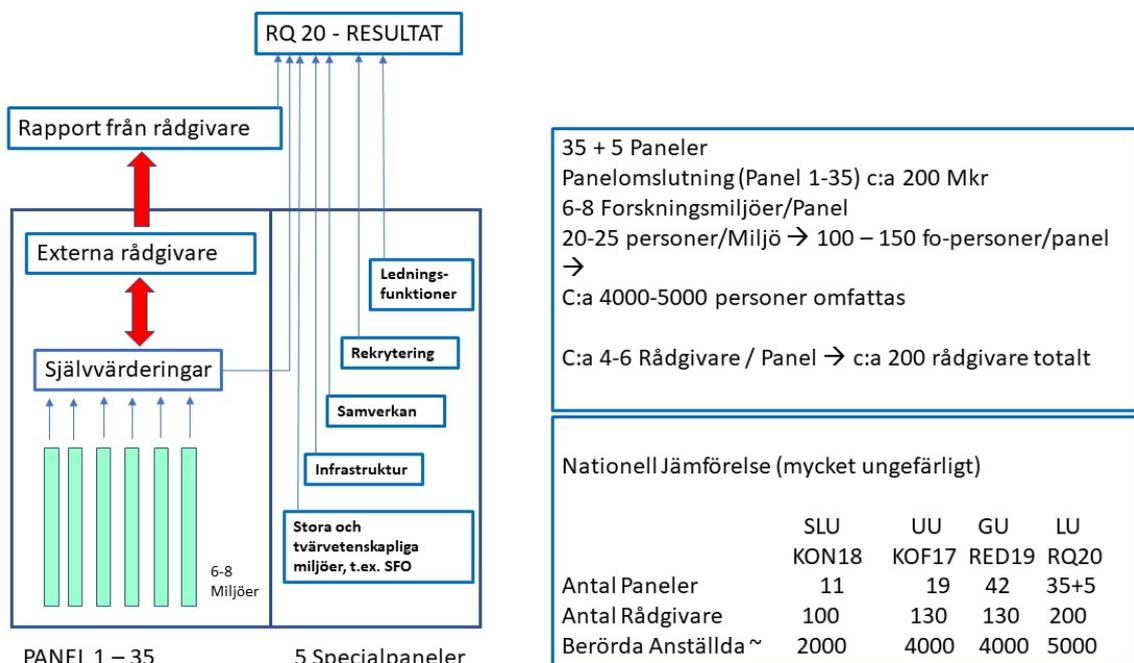
The range of ***infrastructures*** within very wide fields is another characteristic of Lund University. This is not only the case with MAX IV (which receives its own panel) but to larger aggregates of advanced infrastructure within biomedicine, engineering and science, as well as within parts of the humanities and social sciences. Therefore, it is of crucial importance to evaluate how well these infrastructures can be utilised by the research environments and how the interaction between environment and infrastructures works, including management and leadership. We propose that a specific

panel be appointed to evaluate the interaction between research environments and infrastructures as well as the forms of organisation of infrastructures.

External engagement between LU and actors in wider society is an important part of many research areas within Lund University and, without conducting an evaluation of external engagement itself, a task outside the scope of the present evaluation, we suggest a specific panel conduct a cross-faculty analysis of the conditions for external engagement – with support and funding from University management levels. An important aspect is that external engagement be analysed in relation to research quality: the task is to detail when and how external engagement has provided an impulse for reinforced research quality, for example in the form of access to new lines of research, infrastructure, resources, staff exchange etc.

This panel is tasked with making university-wide observations on the organisation, management, implementation and funding of external engagement and its link to societal change. Such challenges are a natural part of a leading university's present-day role, for example as expressed in the EU's missions and in the UN's 17 development goals. The panel is to look at how these kinds of societal development goals are reflected in the University's activities, and whether, and in which way, these can drive quality.

Particular attention should therefore be paid to issues of *recruitment* of researchers at all levels. Each research environment and each panel is instructed to highlight the recruitment into (and out of) the environments; however, the issue of recruitment and renewal – both that which is initiated by the environment and that which responds to calls for applications of different kinds – is of such overall significance, particularly with regard to career development positions, that we suggest a particular cross-faculty panel to highlight it.

	SLU	UU	GU	LU
	KON18	KOF17	RED19	RQ20
Antal Paneler	11	19	42	35+5
Antal Rådgivare	100	130	130	200
Berörda Anställda ~	2000	4000	4000	5000

Report from advisors

External advisors Self-evaluations 6-8 Environments	Management roles Recruitment External engagement Infrastructure Large and interdisciplinary environments, e.g. SRA

PANEL 1 – 35   5 Special panels

35 + 5 Panels Panel funds (Panel 1-35) approx. SEK 200 million 6-8 Research environments/panel 20-25 staff members/environment → 100-150 researchers/panel → Comprising approx. 4000-5000 staff Approx. 4-6 advisors/panel → approx. 200 advisors in total

National Comparison (very rough figures)

	SLU	UU	GU	LU
	KON18	KOF17	RED19	RQ20
Number of panels	11	19	42	35 + 5
Number of advisors	100	130	130	200
Employees concerned	2000	4000	4000	5000

Figure: Overview of RQ20 panel structure with a national comparison

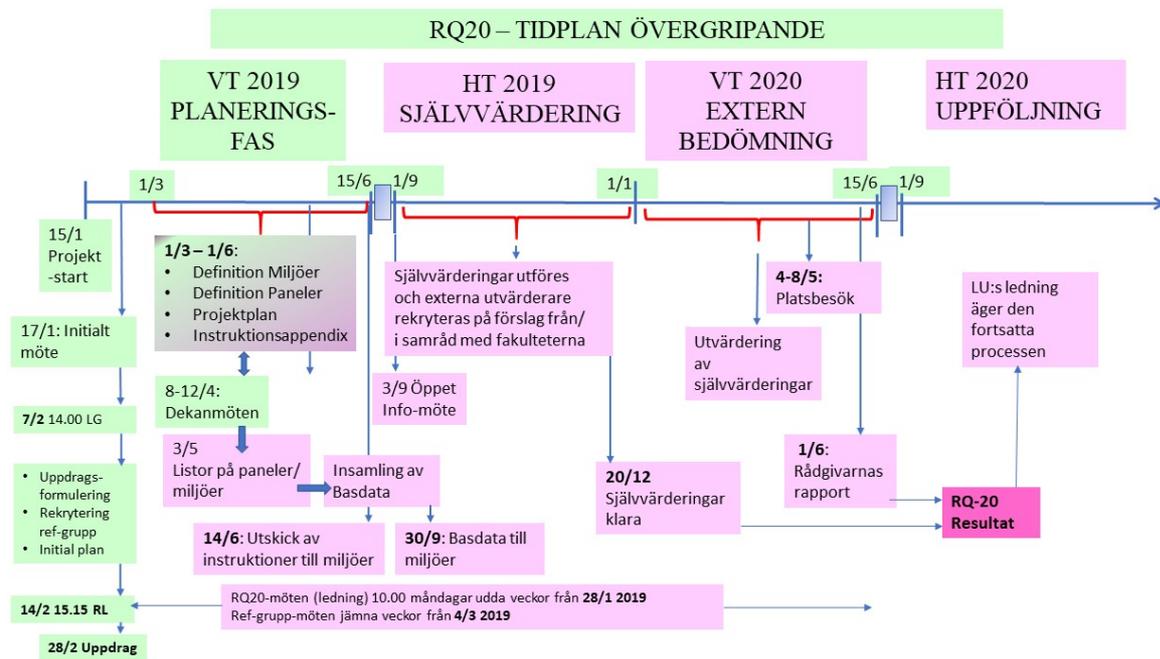**A step-by-step approach: RQ20's method**

The evaluation work is divided into three stages: **A) Planning phase, B) Self-evaluation and C) External Evaluation.**
The stages will partially overlap but it is estimated that each stage will take approximately one semester starting with the 2019 spring semester.

RQ20 Schedule

The three phases of RQ20 (planning phase, self-evaluation and panel evaluation) are to take place during the period 15 January 2019 – 15 June 2020, see figure below. After the completion of the panel evaluation phase, the report is to be submitted to the University

management. Given that autumn 2020 constitutes the current management's last semester in office, RQ20 will effectively build a bridge between the present and future management.

RQ20 – TIDPLAN ÖVERGRIPANDE

VT 2019
PLANERINGS-FAS

HT 2019
SJÄLVVÄRDERING

VT 2020
EXTERN BEDÖMNING

HT 2020
UPPFÖLJNING

1/3   15/6 1/9   1/1   15/6 1/9

15/1 Projekt-start

1/3 – 1/6:
• Definition Miljöer
• Definition Paneler
• Projektplan
• Instruktionsappendix

17/1: Initialt möte

8-12/4: Dekanmöten

Självvärderingar utföres och externa utvärderare rekryteras på förslag från/ i samråd med fakulteterna

4-8/5: Platsbesök

LU:s ledning äger den fortsatta processen

7/2 14.00 LG

3/9 Öppet Info-möte

Utvärdering av självvärderingar

3/5 Listor på paneler/ miljöer

Insamling av Basdata

• Uppdrags-formulering
• Rekrytering ref-grupp
• Initial plan

20/12 Självvärderingar klara

1/6: Rådgivarnas rapport

RQ-20 Resultat

14/6: Utskick av instruktioner till miljöer

30/9: Basdata till miljöer

14/2 15.15 RL

RQ20-möten (ledning) 10.00 måndagar udda veckor från 28/1 2019
Ref-grupp-möten jämna veckor från 4/3 2019

28/2 Uppdrag

RQ20 – GENERAL SCHEDULE

SPRING 2019 PLANNING PHASE	AUTUMN 2019 SELF-EVALUATION	SPRING 2020 EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT	AUTUMN 2020 FOLLOW-UP
1 March	15 June | 1 September	1 January	15 June | 1 September

15/1 Project –start	1/3-1/6: • Definition Environments • Definition Panels • Project plan • Instructions appendix	Self-evaluations carried out and external assessors recruited after proposal from/consultation with the faculties	Evaluation of self-evaluations	Site visits	
17/1: Initial meeting 7/2 14.00 Management group	8-12/4: Dean meetings	3/9 Open information meeting		1/6: Advisors' report	LU management owns the continued process
• Task formulation • Recruitment of ref. group • Initial plan	3/5 Lists of panels/environments	Collection of basic data	20/12 Self-evaluations finalised		RQ20 Results
	14/6 : Instructions sent to environments	30/9: Basic data sent to environments			
14/2 15.15 UM	RQ20 meetings (management) 10.00 Mondays odd week numbers from 28/1 2019 Ref. group meetings even week numbers from 4/3 2019				
28/2 Assignment					

A) Planning phase – structured in three steps:

- In the first step, the research environments and panels are to be defined – a process that involves consultation between RQ20's management, reference group and the faculties.

- In the second step, a number of evaluation dimensions are to be identified and formulated as the basis for the unit self-evaluations.

- In the third step, basic information on the units' funding and activities are to be produced for reflection within the units and as the basis for comments in the self-evaluation but also as documentation for the panels.

  Accordingly, the self-evaluation – and therefore also the panel assessments – is partly based on basic data produced by the RQ20 office in collaboration with support services.

  This basic data should be simple, easy to understand and state something of significance for an understanding of the research environments' working conditions:

  - Research resources (revenue and expenditure 2018)
  - The relationship between education funding (area of activity 11) internal funding (area of activity 21) and external funding (area of activity 35, in 2018)
  - Composition of staff (number of professors, members of teaching staff, researchers, doctoral students)

  The basic material should also include a publication profile at the research environment level for the five-year period 2014-2018. It can cover both productivity and impact, as an average and as a proportion of the most-cited publications within the area. Each evaluation unit should have the opportunity to form an opinion on whether bibliometric analysis is applicable in the area and if it is, this should be included in the basic material.

B) Self-evaluation - structure

The following components should be included in the task of conducting a self-evaluation (which are assigned to the research environments that then organise the work as they see fit). A more detailed description of the tasks assigned to the environments will be provided in an **appendix** to this project plan and distributed before the 2019 summer break.

Format: max 7000 words [40000 characters].

The environments will receive documentation that summarises the publication patterns based on LUCRIS, complemented by a citation profile based on SciVal – a citation profile covering subject areas rather than specific environments.
The units will also receive a summary of the basic financial data (research volume relative to funding agreement targets as well as the balance between internal and external funding) during the same five-year period. The precise delimitation of the basic financial data is done at a later stage; however, this is likely to be determined at department or division level.

The basic information itself does not need to be commented on but should inform the comments on the self-evaluation *themes*, and may be appropriately referred to when describing the research environment's current activities and conditions. The self-evaluation themes are described below. The self-evaluation is under development and will be shared at a later stage.

- The first theme is a summarising analysis of the activities, in the form of a short *SWOT analysis* and a description of which other research environments (within the subject, Sweden or abroad) that the research environment considers useful as points of comparison.

- The second theme focuses on *leadership and organisation*. Here the aim is to produce an overview of how the units identify long-term goals and ambitions for their research activities, including how to follow up on these. In this theme, the research environments have the opportunity to reflect on how the research activities are led, organised, how resources are allocated, how the research funding system is managed at all levels (boards, authorities, EU, internationally) as well as the development of models and ambitions for recruitment. Reflections on the interaction between environment and formal (line) organisation can also be included here, as well as the opportunities and obstacles it creates.

- The third theme is titled collegial *culture*. Here the units have the opportunity to describe and reflect on how they are organised to ensure and reinforce quality in research, for example, through seminars, guests and invitations, the use of advisory groups and collegial comparisons, internal forms of review and development of research, projects and applications, as well as the development of research networks and exchange in the environment.

- The fourth theme is titled *the research ecosystem,* and primarily focuses on how the research links to other tasks such as education at undergraduate and

postgraduate level (including doctoral studies), external engagement with partners outside the University, different forms of utilisation and relation to societal challenges. The aim is therefore to highlight how the quality of the research relates to tasks within and outside the University, and the reciprocal impact of the University: for example, how external engagement is used to develop new research fields and to mobilise resources, to reinforce recruitment and how the relationship between research orientations and the courses and programmes offered is shaped.

- A specific point in the self-evaluation is based on *the units' relationship to the different thematic areas within RQ20*, where these have not been covered previously (management, external engagement, infrastructure, interdisciplinarity and strong environments, recruitment). The issues here may therefore be developed for each specific theme and are likely to primarily relate to the areas of *management* (the unit's relationship to the University's different management levels, faculties and centrally, and in which ways these support the quality of research), the relationship to Lund University's range of infrastructure – which are used, what do the forms of use look like, how can they be developed, - as well as *interdisciplinarity and strong environments*, where the units have the opportunity to comment on how their activities relate to any of the University's specified areas of strength (SRAs, the Linnaeus research environment or similar).

- Finally, there is room for additional reflections and a block of questions on the internal process: how the work was structured, how the staff were involved, how the report was written, which expectations there were prior to, during and after RQ20.

C) Panel evaluation – proposal for structure to follow

NOTE:
The RQ20 project plan is a live document and may be edited further following consultation with the University and faculty managements.