FACULTY
OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
Charles University

STRATEGIC PLAN

of the Faculty of Social Sciences
of Charles University
for the Period 2021–2025

Preamble

With its teaching and scientific activities, the Faculty of Social Sciences of Charles University (FSV UK) contributes to the understanding of society in cultural, historical, economic and territorial contexts. At the expert plane, the faculty cooperates at all levels of the public sphere - with the public and private sectors, the media and non-profit organizations.

We are an institution that lies "in the heart of Europe" not only by geographical location, but also by its academic level. At our faculty, top experts from the Czech Republic and abroad meet, and thanks to a wide range of study offers and interdisciplinary permeability, we are a very attractive school for Czech and foreign students.

FSV UK is a prestigious research institute with an international dimension – as evidenced by the number of international projects or cooperation within the 4EU+ alliance. Within the university, our faculty has the highest number of joint and double degree programmes, as well as the overall highest number of foreign language study programmes. We cooperate with European universities within the ERASMUS+ programme, which is complemented by other programmes of international mobility with leading non-European educational and research institutions.

Teachers of our faculty are invited as keynote speakers to prestigious conferences and are members or advisers of major national and international boards. Owing to this, studying at our faculty offers an extraordinary opportunity to gain foreign experience at prestigious workplaces. According to international rankings, we stand among the clear leaders in all our study fields in the Czech Republic, and in some study fields even in Central Europe.

Our graduates and teachers hold important positions in public life - as experts at ministries, embassies of the Czech Republic, the European Union, Czech and international or multinational commercial companies, they are leading economists, well-known journalists, politicians or representatives of research agencies. In these positions, they co-frame public opinion on important issues of society-wide nature.

The strategic plan, which summarizes the goals and procedures for strengthening all of the above-mentioned, is adopted in times of social and economic uncertainty, which may slow down or completely reduce some of the planned activities. However, we will make every effort to ensure that this occurs to the smallest extent possible, always in accordance with the specifying plan for the implementation of the strategic plan of FSV UK for a given calendar year.

Our Vision

We seek to create and disseminate knowledge that contributes to the understanding, development and quality of life in today's society. In all areas of our activity, we strive to be a faculty that respects the values it has been established on. The following activities, in particular, are crucial for us: interdisciplinarity, innovation and internationalization.

In the field of social sciences, we aspire to be a leading educational and research institution that shows the way, analyzes the topics of contemporary society and, through its academic staff and graduates, contributes to their solution. Thanks to the high level of education and research provided, we want to continue to occupy leading positions in the rankings of universities in domestic and international comparisons. All our students will thus have the opportunity to gain first-class knowledge in their study fields and general academic skills. In addition, we will continue to strive for the openness of the academic environment, which is a breeding ground for free discussion and the yielding of new scientific knowledge.

We want to maintain the trend of transforming the faculty into a modern institution which, although aware of its tradition, can flexibly respond to the challenges of today and be proactive in many areas also within the whole Charles University.

Last but not least, we will strive to ensure that our cooperation with the private, public and non-profit sectors contributes to the development of society as well as to the viability of the faculty.

Our Values

- Support for scholarly interest, purposefulness, individuality and success of each of our students, employees and the faculty as a whole.
- Academic freedom, support for creative thinking and academic discussion.
- Respect for diversity and striving for the atmosphere of a fair, friendly and helpful community.
- The faculty as a stimulating and enjoyable place for a wide range of academic activities.
- Responsibility and ethical conduct in all our activities, whether while participating in a public debate, in the process of passing down findings and acquired knowledge, or in the teaching and research process itself.

Our Goals

1. To create modern and innovative study programmes from Bachelor's to doctoral degree programmes.
2. To improve the conditions for inspiring and innovative scientific activity.
3. To deepen the international reputation of the faculty.
4. To prepare a modern background for the future development of the faculty.
5. To solidify the position of FSV UK as a faculty of first choice for the best students, teachers, scientists and administrative staff.

1.

Modern and Innovative Education from Bachelor's Degree to Doctorate

Interconnecting modern approaches, efficiency and new knowledge is and must be the cornerstone of every study programme. Our graduates have proven - and we will strive to keep it that way – that they are well prepared to find their place in the realm of practice as well as in science and academia. The year 2020 led us – not only in our teaching activities - to unusual methods, which, however, often seem to be more suitable for modern students and society. It will, therefore, be necessary to carefully analyze these new approaches and individually assess their suitability for the future. On the other hand, we would not like to sacrifice social interaction as one of the necessary conditions of the educational process and we aim to maintain in-class forms of study where possible.

Strategic priorities:

- Development of modern and flexible forms of education
- Support for excellence
- Development of teaching skills of academic staff, also in connection with the use of technologies
- Support for interconnecting teaching with practice
- Increasing the study success of doctoral studies while maintaining high demands,
- Implementation of evaluation of the quality of study programmes and use of its results to increase the level of study
- Re-accreditation of part of study programmes
- Care and proper background for students, support for students with special needs,
- Maintaining a wide range of courses for the University of the Third Age.

Activities:

We will retrospectively analyze the course and impact of the pandemic situation in 2020 on teaching and focus on the use of new technologies and a flexible approach to education, and we will support the application of best practices in standard teaching. If necessary, respective regulations, measures or instructions will be adapted in connection with this analysis.

We will offer our teaching staff such courses and workshops that inspire them to use new teaching techniques. We will focus on the promotion of courses and workshops offered by RUK.

We will initiate new and innovative ways of teaching (including assessments of study) and test their relevance for the taught study fields.

We will develop a comprehensive concept for the modernization of teaching, including the enhancement of methods of blended learning.

We will strengthen and develop evidence-based teaching by systematically acquiring, evaluating and sharing the teaching experience of staff across institutes.

We will increase merit-based scholarships for the best students, at least in proportion to the increase in the funds allocated for this purpose.

We will support interconnecting the studies with practice. Experts from practice will be even more involved in teaching; they will pass on their knowledge and professional experience to students. At the same time, we will provide students with the opportunity to undertake the internship associated with their study programme in the course of their study. Already during their studies, they will become acquainted with the

work environment where - as graduates - they can find their job placement. Subjects taught by experts from practice will be part of the accreditation of study programmes. Study plans will also include individual subjects with students' internships being their main agenda.

Furthermore, we will develop international cooperation, including support for the so-called co-tutelle or joint and double-degree forms of doctoral study programmes.

We will focus more on flexible forms of education. The faculty has accredited study programmes with a distance form of study. Based on the experience from the first years of implementation, we will supplement the content of electronic study support for these study programmes and improve the technological background for the implementation of this form of teaching. We will address the possibilities of expanding the number of study programmes with distance learning.

We will adjust the system of evaluating the employees so that it stimulates them more to increase the quality of their teaching.

We will continue to structuralize and clarify procedures within study agendas.

We will support the cooperation of students of Master's study programmes, who are already engaged in scientific research activities during their studies, with doctoral students and research teams, in the form of research assistants. We will motivate these students to proceed to doctoral studies.

We will regularly perform an audit of doctoral studies and use its results to improve doctoral studies.

We will actively and attractively present doctoral studies to those interested, especially with reference to the possibility of postdoctoral career development in the conditions of research universities.

We will emphasize the immediate involvement of doctoral students in research and the related improvement of the quality of supervisors. The supervisor must be an academic or scientific staff member (e.g. associate professor, professor or expert on a given issue), whose expertise is from the national and international perspective a guarantee of good-quality and proper supervision of the student. At the same time, the supervisor must have enough time to guide the student.

We will also develop and monitor the activities of the Centres for Doctoral Studies at individual institutes. The aim of these centres is the functional involvement of students in the activities of the respective institutes and to ensure such financial conditions for the best doctoral students that they can fully devote themselves to their studies and research and do not have to look for any additional sources of income.

We will fully integrate doctoral students into the life of the faculty. In the week before the beginning of the academic year, we will annually organize a Welcome Week for doctoral students of all the study years. This welcome week will include seminars on research (e.g. ethics of scientific work, work with information sources) and teaching skills. Furthermore, every year in the week before the start of the summer semester, we will organize Days of Young Science (in cooperation with the department of science also for postdoctoral students) with a seminar with relevant information for doctoral and postdoctoral science (which will be also published on the web) and mentoring activities. English will be the working language of all these events.

We will focus on providing all information for doctoral students in English. We will continue to carry out student evaluations of doctoral courses and doctoral studies.

We will systematically develop support for students with special needs so that more of them can study at our faculty and have optimal support and the financial and methodological support of teachers linked to it.

We will financially support students who represent the faculty at scientific conferences already during their undergraduate studies.

We will implement a system for evaluating the quality of study programmes. The Board for Internal Evaluation of Charles University is preparing an evaluation system which, once established, we will apply to study programmes at FSV UK. The results of the evaluation will be used by the faculty to increase the quality of studies.

We will re-accredit study programmes that have been accredited by the Board for Internal Evaluation as part of the accreditation process for a period of five years and will, therefore, end in 2023-2025. We will prepare high-quality proposals for accreditation of study programmes, aiming to achieve their approval for a maximum period of 10 years.

We will provide training for guarantors of study programmes so that they are well acquainted with the principles of the quality evaluation system of study programmes at Charles University.

We will continue to organize newly established regular meetings of the student services office with representatives of the secretariats of institutes and departments on the issue of study agenda processes.

In case of study programmes that have a rigorosum procedure within the accreditation, we will ensure that they still maintain high demands on the quality of rigorosum theses and knowledge of applicants in the state rigorosum examination and that the rules for the implementation of this procedure are clearly set (e.g. regarding recognition of Master's theses as rigorosum theses).

We will continue to pay attention to the University of the Third Age (U3V) as an important part of lifelong learning at Charles University. We will continue to offer a wide thematic range of the prepared U3V courses to enable applicants to become acquainted with the various scientific areas nurtured at our faculty. We belong to the faculties with the largest scope of teaching for U3V within Charles University, which is also reflected in the high number of students. We will maintain a quality administrative background for the U3V organization.

Indicators:

- Funds paid for merit-based scholarships
- Survey of the use of modern technologies and flexible approaches to education among academic staff members
- Work procedures of study agendas
- Supported research teams including undergraduate students and doctoral students
- Share of doctoral students with grant support
- Number of doctoral scholarships and the total financial resources for doctoral students from the faculty
- Number of doctoral students who have been trained in teaching skills
- Study success rates in doctoral study programmes

(Person in charge: vice-dean for student affairs, vice-dean for doctoral studies and other forms of education, vice-dean for concept and quality of studies, a member of the Dean's collegium for e-learning and new educational platforms)

2.

Inspiring and Innovative Science

We seek to develop top social science research at the national and international level, which significantly contributes to understanding the current problems of modern society and to framing a strategy for their solution. In scientific cooperation, we seek to be an attractive, cooperative and serious partner, who is a guarantee of new knowledge, innovative approaches and methods as well as high-quality results.

Strategic priorities:

- Effective use of capacities in the area of research
- Motivation of academic and scientific staff for excellent creative performances
- Field-related and interdisciplinary cooperation at the faculty, university, national and international level
- Flexible team research with the involvement of doctoral and Master's students
- Enhancing applied and contract research

Activities:

We will develop tools and mechanisms for the strategic management of science policy at the level of the faculty, institutes and study fields, including the formulation of the structure of research priorities and the formation of corresponding research teams.

We will continue to develop a system of support for creative activities, covering all stages of the creative process and minimizing the related administrative burden to the minimum necessary.

We will continue to improve our research infrastructure.

We will elaborate a system for evaluating the creative performance of an individual at the level of institutes and departments and develop tools for motivation to achieve the highest possible level of creative activity of an individual with the aim to enable and support his/her professional growth and the related better material evaluation.

We will set the framework criteria for creative and teaching performance for individual stages of career advancement.

We will use the results of the ongoing evaluation of creative activity at Charles University to create a system of regular evaluation of the quality of creative activity of study fields within the faculty.

We will continue to be intensively involved in all projects of science policy at Charles University, in national and international (European) project competitions. We will focus on research projects with the potential for innovative and excellent results, promising high professional prestige on a national and international scale and interesting financial benefits.

We will continue to cultivate the research and work environment and provide researchers (especially those just starting) with support in addressing ethical issues related to research and publishing its results.

We will elaborate the strategy of the faculty and individual study fields in the area of applied and contract research.

We will focus more on our engagement in public space and in the popularization of social sciences and explaining their contribution to the development of modern society.

Indicators:

- Better placement of our main study fields in university evaluation
- Number of grants awarded from reputable national and foreign providers
- Receiving an ERC project or another prestigious European project, in which the faculty would be the coordinator
- Number of projects within university programmes
- Number of publications in the highest-quality professional journals and publishers
- National and international awards for scientific work of students and staff
- Amount of funds obtained from the projects of contract research
- Career regulations of the faculty and career regulations of the institutes

(Person in charge: vice-dean for science and research)

3.

Faculty with International Reputation

International cooperation and mobility have long been one of the basic pillars of academic and scientific activity at our faculty. International students and teachers form an integral part of our academic community. The international experience of students, academic and non-academic staff of FSV UK has proved to be an irreplaceable asset in their further professional career. Therefore, we will continue to encourage them in international activities and help with implementing them. International students and teachers enhance the social and cultural diversity of our academic environment. Education in an international and multicultural environment helps students avoid stereotypes, form more complex opinions and it also teaches them to cope with different interpersonal and communication styles. Students thus become better active listeners and critical thinkers.

Strategic priorities:

- Strengthening the international dimension of the educational process
- Active involvement in international university alliances
- Support and deepening of cooperation with prestigious universities in Europe and in the world
- Development of high-quality and internationally attractive study programmes, establishment of new double degree programmes
- Strengthening relations with foreign graduates

Activities:

To ensure appropriate conditions for the study of foreign students and the work of foreign academic staff, we will continue to deepen the building of a bilingual environment not only at the level of staff, but also services. For this purpose, we define the basic standards of language policy at FSV UK.

To ensure appropriate conditions for foreign academic staff members visiting our faculty for short or long-term stays, we will focus on working closely with the university's Staff Welcome Centre. This centre provides a complete service to incoming academic staff members and researchers and their families.

We will continue to develop and support the mobility of students, academic and non-academic staff, especially within the Erasmus+ programme, but also within the framework of interfaculty and interuniversity agreements.

We intend to become increasingly involved in the activities of university alliances (e.g. 4EU+) and implement projects within strategic partnerships.

We will develop and deepen cooperation with partners in Europe, in particular by striving to maintain as much contact as possible with universities in the United Kingdom. We will also focus on strengthening cooperation with partners in North America and Asia.

To ensure effective cooperation with foreign partners, we will review concluded agreements, either within the Erasmus+ programme or inter-faculty agreements. We will also review the involvement of FSV UK in cooperation within inter-university agreements.

We will continue to develop the quality of our foreign language study programmes and their internationalization in the form of new joint study programmes (joint and double degree) and the supervision of final doctoral theses (cotutelle).

We will focus on building the FSV UK mark as an international faculty.

We will also continue to intensively promote our foreign language study programmes on various platforms, participate in trade fairs and foreign educational events, as well as strengthen individual branches of PR activities in accordance with the unifying idea of reaching the best students from abroad and bringing them to study at FSV UK.

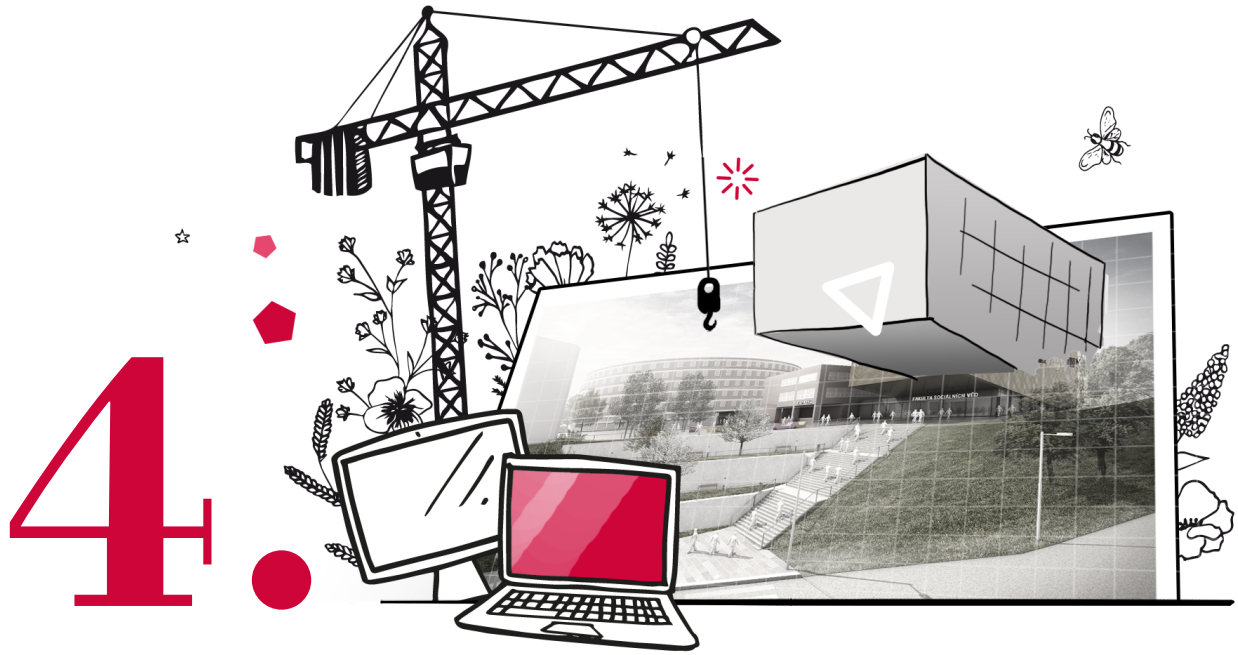
We will introduce a system for project management used to secure more professional and effective communication with applicants for studies in CJSP and internal coordination of processes and their checking in the admission procedure.

We will focus on strengthening relations with our foreign graduates, who - after their successful studies - represent informal envoys of our faculty, Charles University and the Czech Republic in the world. Intensive ties can support research, academic, diplomatic or business relationships. It is also important to use their potential, for example in PR activities.

Indicators:

- Number of student and employee mobilities
- Number of study programmes taught in a foreign language
- Number of study programmes conducted in the form of joint and double degree
- Number of foreign students
- Number of attended trade fairs and foreign educational events
- Comprehensive implementation of a system leading to the professionalization of management processes and processes associated with the admissions procedure
- Creation of tools used for communication with foreign alumni

(Person in charge: vice-dean for international relations and a member of the Dean's collegium for international and foreign-language degree programmes)



4. Modern Background for Further Development

Obtaining project funding for the reconstruction and completion of the Jinonice campus will enable the faculty to enter the fourth decade of its existence with secured spatial and material background for further development. Combined with the continuous improvement of the information and computer infrastructure and progressive measures in the field of the personnel, the faculty has a unique opportunity to become a more comfortable and inspiring place for the faculty staff who can thus devote themselves more effectively to their academic mission.

Strategic priorities:

- Successful completion of the project of reconstruction and completion of the Jinonice campus, followed by the supply of interior and IT equipment, commencement of teaching in 2022 and fulfilment of indicators linked to the Jinonice campus for the period of sustainability in 2023–2027
- Comprehensive reorganization of the spatial layout in connection with the completion of the Jinonice campus of the faculty, including the provision of premises for the activities of students and their associations and the preservation of catering facilities for students and staff
- Effective use of internal and external project funding for further development of the faculty
- Provision of modern library services, including the provision of adequate material background for study and research as well as access to increasingly important electronic resources
- Increasing the efficiency of the administrative background of academic activities, including efficient and flexible IT support and computerization of administrative agendas in connection with university processes in this area
- Introduction of effective analytical tools within the internal control system and their use for active supervision of the economic management of the faculty
- Implementation of a new system of evaluating employees in connection with the new career regulations, strengthening the principles of internal justice and external competitiveness in remuneration
- Ensuring a work-life balance, including improving a systematic approach to education and development of employees and reconfiguring employee benefits to better suit individual needs of the employees and current trends

Activities:

Reconstructing and completing the Jinonice campus, the faculty will take a fundamental step towards comfortable and sustainable conditions. We will ensure that this project is implemented as efficiently, economically and timely as possible. Following the structural changes in spatial provision, we will ensure that all the faculty's buildings are not only purposeful, but also a pleasant, comfortable and much liked place for work and study. At the same time, it will be an opportunity to improve the functioning of the faculty in terms of environmental sustainability.

The role of libraries in the process of teaching and research has been undergoing a drastic change. The aim of the faculty is to balance the provision of traditional library services, including sufficient space for individual and collective study, and the need for a continuous, comprehensive and financially sustainable access to electronic sources of information.

Project management will be an increasingly important component of faculty activities. Based on the experience of the past period, we will adjust the project management processes to meet the faculty needs and priorities and enable effective horizontal interconnection of partial agendas.

The area of information and computer technologies is developing rapidly. We will implement structural measures that will ensure the sustainable and continuous development of the faculty's infrastructure and the regular, systematic and controlled replacement of IT equipment, including the flexible use of this infrastructure for teaching purposes.

The computerization of administrative processes at the faculty has so far been rather rudimentary and partial. Based on the reflection of the past period, we can conclude that the faculty is ready to participate in all purposeful university-wide projects in this area in order to reduce the administrative burden on academic staff and researchers so that they can fully devote themselves to their priority activities.

At the same time, we will improve the computerization of processes at the faculty independently of the university environment where this will not bring the need for a parallel double agenda for administrative staff. We will finalize the form and transition of all the websites of the institutes, units and projects to a new unified solution, which will - among other things - enable the operative publicizing of scholarly publications of faculty members.

We will develop existing analytical tools for their more intensive use within the internal control system for active supervision of the economic management of the faculty. We will prepare an amended measure of the Dean on the procedure for awarding public tenders.

We will introduce a new comprehensive system of evaluating the employees linked to the new career regulations in order to support career development and strengthen the principle of internal justice, which ensures equal reward for equal work and equal performance under the same transparent circumstances. At the same time, we intend to rely on the principle of external competitiveness within our segment.

We are updating the employee benefits system to provide employees with a choice while ensuring efficient, transparent and fair use of the social fund.

We seek to maintain and further develop support for the so-called "work-life balance" area by strengthening the possibilities of working from home, flexible working hours, etc. We will regularly monitor the administrative burden on teaching and scientific staff of FSV UK and propose specific steps to reduce the burden.

We will continue to support the further education of our employees, taking into account the relevance of courses for their future personal development, including the development of language skills of the employees.

Indicators:

- Completed Jinonice mini-campus, put into operation and timely completion of the faculty's project OP VVV in call no. 016
- Comprehensively implemented experience from project management across faculty administration
- Functionally extended availability of electronic sources of information
- Websites of institutes, units and projects in a new unified solution
- Generated and implemented system of regular and systematic renewal of IT equipment, incl. online teaching tools
- Computerized circulation of documents involved in university-wide solution
- New system of evaluating employees in connection with the career regulations of FSV UK
- Updated system of faculty benefits
- Amended faculty regulations aimed at enabling more flexible use of work from home and maintaining work-life balance

(Person in charge: vice-dean for development, Faculty Secretary, a member of the Dean's collegium - „Modernisation and Extension of the Spatial Background for Teaching in Jinonice Campus" Project)

5. Faculty for a Lifetime

We strive to be a faculty with which it is possible to connect for a lifetime, from Bachelor's degree studies, through alumni associations to the university of the third age. The faculty, which is the first choice for applicants planning to study social science programmes and a stable background for students, graduates, members of academic staff and researchers and other employees. As a public institution, we want to continue to contribute to the development of civil society and understanding of its current development.

Strategic priorities:

- Clear and attractive presentation of the offer of study programmes, owing to which FSV UK will be the first choice for applicants of any age
- Strengthening the communication of the faculty in the English language
- Cultivating and increasing the scope of the offer of foreign language study programmes
- Use of marketing tools in accordance with current trends and policy of the faculty
- Strengthening promotion and communication in the online environment using marketing tools in accordance with current trends and policy of the faculty
- Supporting the feeling of belonging of students, academic staff members and researchers and other employees to FSV UK
- Effective communication across the units of the faculty and within individual workplaces
- Systematic building of the FSV UK mark with the contribution of own experts, students and graduates
- Strengthening the image of FSV UK as an institution whose experts help the general public to understand the changes and contexts in the development of contemporary society at home and abroad

Activities:

In communication towards applicants, we will take into account the specificity of target groups (high school students, graduates of Bachelor's programmes, applicants for doctoral studies, those interested in studying at a university of the third age, etc.). The basic means will involve online communication with maximum use of the web, social networks and platforms for video conferencing.

We will create and disseminate content in English on the information channels of the faculty so that it corresponds to the quality and quantity of communication in the Czech language.

We will support the activities of student associations and the organization of faculty-wide events, where students, academic staff members and researchers and other employees of FSV UK will meet.

We will improve information-sharing between individual parts of the faculty through effective tools of internal communication. In connection with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the lives of all employees and students, we will strengthen the means of online communication (e.g. business and social meetings) and we will continue to work on the community development of the faculty also in this modified environment.

We will focus on the quality of communication with students, on the part of the faculty's management and Dean's office as well as individual institutes.

We will continue to strive for the closest possible cooperation between the faculty's management, institutes, centres and the academic senate in the preparation of fundamental decisions regarding the further direction of FSV UK.

Through professional seminars, debates and public presentations of our academic and scientific staff, we will continue to help the public to orientate themselves in current society-wide topics. Academic and research staff as well as students will be supported in communicating with the professional and general public. At the same time, their affiliation with FSV UK will be emphasized.

We will strengthen the uniform visual style of the presentation of the faculty.

With regard to the priorities of the faculty, we will continuously evaluate the effectiveness of the faculty's communication with target groups. Following this evaluation, we will further optimize the communication strategy.

By systematically working with our graduates, we will increase public awareness of the wide professional applicability of the social sciences.

By mediating a varied offer of career opportunities, we will further improve the quality of employment of our graduates in the labour market.

Indicators:

- Recruitment activities in online and offline environments
- Social and community events for students, teachers, other employees and graduates of the faculty
- Uniform visual style of the faculty
- Organized events leading to the fulfilment of the third role of the faculty
- Career counselling
- Amount of support for student activities

(Person in charge: the Dean)