



2025

STUDENT HANDBOOK





A warm welcome to the GRÓ Gender Equality Studies and Training (GEST) programme. In this handbook you will find useful information for your stay in Iceland during the GEST postgraduate diploma programme (30 ECTS).

You must read this handbook carefully before you arrive in Iceland.

Once in Iceland, we will refer you to the CANVAS website for each module accessed through UGLA, the university intranet, where supporting academic material for the programme is stored. It is important that you sign into CANVAS daily for information and updates. Furthermore, you will be provided with a university e-mail account for you to use during your semester in Iceland.

We hope your time in Iceland will be one of growth and learning!

The GEST Team

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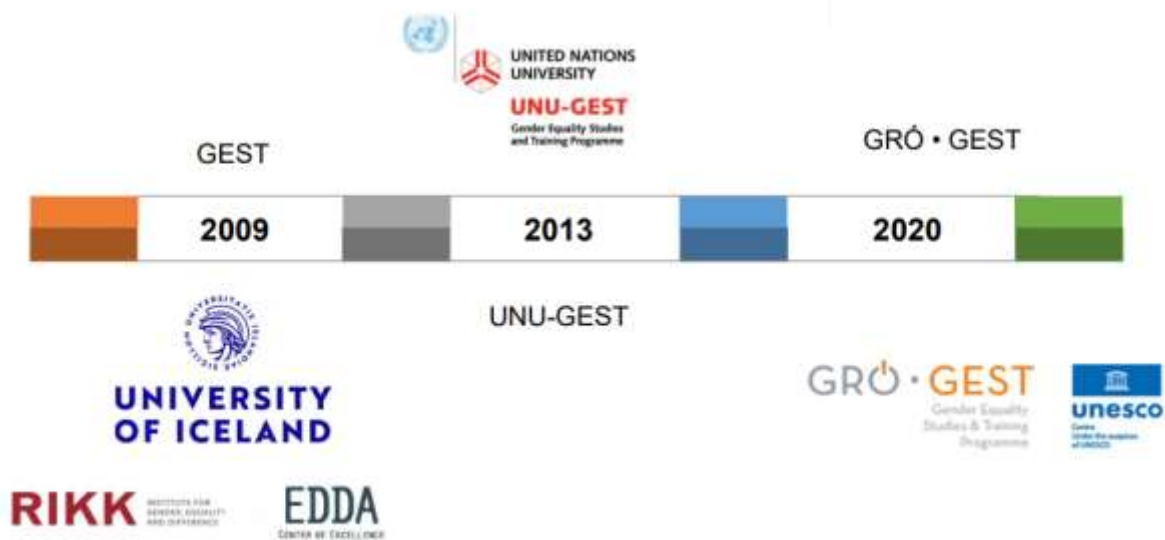
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THE 2025 GRÓ GEST POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA PROGRAMME:

HISTORY

The Gender Equality Studies and Training programme (GEST) was established in January 2009 through an agreement between the University of Iceland and the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The GEST programme was piloted from 2009 to 2013, with the goal of becoming accredited as a part of the United Nations University. An independent evaluation of GEST was conducted in June 2012 as one of the key prerequisites for GEST joining the UNU network. The results showed that the goals, quality, and structure of the programme correlated with the requirements of the UNU network and following the successful evaluation, the three parties concluded a trilateral agreement in May 2013 between the University of Iceland, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland and the United Nations University (UNU).

In December 2019, after seven years of collaboration, the United Nations University and the GEST programme parted ways, with GEST joining the other three Icelandic former UNU programmes (Fisheries Training Programme, Geothermal Training Programme and Land Restoration Training Programme) in GRÓ - Centre for Capacity Development, Sustainable Use of Natural Resources and Societal Change. The four programmes and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recognised the potential for collaboration based on their strong focus on capacity development and their global presence and GRÓ now operates under the auspices of UNESCO as a category 2 centre. The new partnership was signed on 16 December 2019 by the Icelandic Foreign Minister and the Director General of UNESCO.



AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

GEST is part of GRÓ - International Centre for Capacity Development – Sustainable use of Natural Resources and Societal Change. GRÓ's mission is to strengthen individual, organisational and institutional capacities in low income, conflict and post-conflict countries and to deliver

development results in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This work is carried out through capacity development training programmes with a focus on four thematic areas:

The Gender Equality Studies and Training Programme (GEST) which promotes gender equality, and social justice.

The Fisheries Training Programme (FTP) which promotes sustainable use and management of living aquatic resources.

The Geothermal Training Programme (GTP) promoting the utilisation and sustainable management of reliable, economically viable, and environmentally sound geothermal energy resources.

The Land Restoration Training Programme (LRT) which focuses on combatting land degradation, restoring degraded land and promoting sustainable land management.

The overall goal of the GEST programme is to educate and train participants in gender equality theories and methods and to strengthen their professional capacities for advancing and implementing gender sensitive projects in their home countries. The programme's curriculum covers both basic gender theory and key tools for practical project development, in addition to studies in security, migration and environment. It incorporates an interdisciplinary approach and encourages intellectual debates and the development of new methodological practices.

GRÓ GEST aims to enhance an understanding of the structures and mechanisms that need to be in place to promote gender equality in global and local contexts. The programme emphasises critical thinking skills and aims to equip fellows with the essential analytical tools for understanding gender equality and its impacts on social development and public policy.

The programme is based on principles of team-based learning, with an emphasis on transnational dialogue, cultural difference, and social diversity. Fellows and instructors are encouraged to develop a sense of how meaning is transformed when travelling from one culture to another.

The main objectives are to develop:

- The capacity to advance gender equality in low and middle income, conflict, and post-conflict societies.
- An understanding of the main issues in international gender equality studies, and how they intersect with ethnicity, sexuality, religion, race, and class.
- Skills in gender analysis and in dissemination of knowledge about gender equality methods.
- The capacity to engage in critical and transnational dialogue on gender equality issues.
- An ability to organize and manage projects focusing on gender equality.
- A sense of the individual's social and geographic location, and of how meanings of main concepts and practices are changed through transnational knowledge transfers and dialogues.

HOW TO SURVIVE THE GEST PROGRAMME AND ICELAND?

1. Respect each other, listen to each other, and stay curious. If you are used to taking up a lot of space in conversation, practice active listening and creating space for others. If you are used to sitting back and letting others do the talking, practice speaking up.
2. Attend all classes and be on time. The programme uses facial recognition software to register attendance. Therefore, it is better to show up 5 minutes before class and register in time
3. Practice good time management and respect deadlines. If you are organised in your academic work, this can free up some time on the weekends for you to enjoy getting to know Iceland. If you are not organised, you will have very little time to do things other than studying.
4. Take good care of yourself, especially during the winter months, when the darkness and cold can have an impact on physical as well as mental health. Eat healthy, go for walks (especially during the daylight hours), go to the pool or the gym, and take vitamin D to make up for lost sunlight.
5. Do not panic if you do not understand the reading material right away. Some texts are easy while others are heavy and difficult. Take your time and read slowly and thoroughly. Write down questions and comments for each text you read.
6. Don't rely on AI tools to do your work for you. It counts as plagiarism and the university software TurnItIn detects it immediately.
7. Check CANVAS and your university email daily. That is how GEST shares with you all the information you need in Iceland.
8. Download the Klapp app and use it to get around the city by bus.
9. If you have any questions, start by looking for the answer in this handbook. You are quite likely to find the answer in here.

The offices of the GEST team are located on the 3rd floor in the university building called Gimli, in offices #323-325 and 309. If you have any questions, you can always write an email to gest@hi.is. If you need to speak with any GEST staff member, set an appointment with them through email or visit the office during their office hours. GEST office hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays between 14:30 and 15:00. Please respect the announced office hours.

INTEGRITY AND CONDUCT

The GEST academic programme is an intensive blend of classroom hours, trips and visits, and joint work on assignments. Fellows typically spend a lot of time together and come to depend on each other for support, guidance, and assistance, especially given the new and sometimes challenging environment. Thus, each cohort of GEST fellows grows into a closely knit community providing support to its members. GEST wishes to remind all students, supervisors, and teaching staff that they are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that positively contributes to an environment of respect, civility, diversity, and inclusiveness. We place strong emphasis on reflecting the values we stand by, both inside and outside of the academic setting, and consider GEST fellows and faculty to be our best ambassadors.

GEST has adopted a zero-tolerance policy on **sexual harassment and abuse**, hate speech, racism, drug use, and soliciting prostitution. We are committed to enforcing this policy, and all fellows will be subject to discipline, up to and including immediate expulsion from the academic programme, for a first offence. With expulsion from the academic programme, fellows will also forfeit their rights to their scholarships.

Please see the Rules of Procedure on the Response to Gender-Related and Sexual Harassment and Other Sexual Violence in Annex 1 and the Equal Rights Policy of the University of Iceland [here](#).

GEST will make every reasonable effort to address any breach of conduct that may occur. Every report will be investigated promptly and impartially, with every effort to maintain confidentiality. The complainant and the accused will be informed of the results of the investigation.

ORGANISATION

In 2025, the GEST programme will consist of six modules, each with different ECTS credits¹.

At the end of the programme, GEST and the University of Iceland will award an official Postgraduate Diploma Certificate from the University of Iceland to successful fellows. The diploma yields 30 ECTS credits, which corresponds to half a year's work at a postgraduate level.

If you are undertaking or are considering taking a master's degree within the sphere of gender-related studies, you may seek accreditation of the diploma's credits towards your degree. You are encouraged to inquire about this possibility with the specific university when applying for your future studies.

In the spring term of 2025, the following modules compose the GEST programme.

Modules	Module Coordinators	ECTS
Theories and Concepts of Gender	Thomas Brorsen Smidt	3
Project Development Tools	Thomas Brorsen Smidt	6
Gender, Violence and Security	Giti Chandra	5
Gender, Labour and Migration	Thomas Brorsen Smidt	5
Gender, Environment and Climate Change	Irma Erlingsdóttir	5
Final Assignment	Margrét Ann Thors	6

Information about locations and classroom numbers will be announced in January. You will receive weekly updates on your class schedule to your University of Iceland e-mail. There you will find all the sessions, additional lectures and field visits planned as well as the classrooms.

¹ Commonly referred to simply as ECTS, which stands for *European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System*, these are the credit points earned for each module. This standardized credit system is intended to ensure appropriate workload between university courses and ease of transfer of credits between institutions.

ORIENTATION

At the start of the programme, a three-day orientation is scheduled for all participants in the GEST programme. The purpose of the orientation week is for fellows to get to know one another and make them familiar with their new academic working environment, the ins and outs of everyday life in Reykjavik, and what is expected of them during the five-month programme. This will be done through some fun and light get-acquainted activities in person, as well as more focused teamwork exercises aimed at strengthening in-group cooperation. Moreover, time will be dedicated to review rules and expectations in relation to integrity and conduct, standards of academic excellence, and the work ethic that is expected of you during your stay.

TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

The teaching is organized in modules, running weekdays in the mornings and afternoons. To obtain a postgraduate diploma, fellows must successfully complete six modules, equalling a total of 30 ECTS.

Teaching sessions will include lectures, group work, discussions, and workshops, as well as field visits. The programme requires you to be well prepared for each class. Fellows are expected to actively participate in class discussions and engage in the activities planned for this programme. Non-compliance with this requirement may result in failure to pass modules and consequently not receiving a diploma at the end of the semester.

The syllabus for each module of the programme indicates how it is assessed. This may be through participation, small written assignments, final essays, presentations, and TQQs.

What are TQQs?

TQQs are a didactic learning tool that was adopted by the GEST programme in 2017. TQQs are used to assess student comprehension of selected assigned readings. TQQs are used in most GEST modules and are generally carried out as a team-based exercise.

TQQ stands for Thesis, Quote, Question. A TQQ assignment is carried out by team members *reading the assigned texts* carefully, meeting to discuss the text (either in class or outside class, depending on the module and individual instructor), and writing down the following:

- Thesis: By “thesis” we mean a paragraph that effectively and concisely articulates the author’s main argument. There may be several main points expressed in a particular reading— focus on the one you think is most central to the argument that the author wishes to make.
- Quote: By “quote” we mean students should identify one statement that stood out to them in the reading. Students may make their choice for any reason (for instance: because they seem particularly intriguing or important, puzzling or inspiring, wrong-headed or illuminating, basic or novel, etc...) but should **explain in writing why they chose the statement they did and be prepared to discuss it during class. Quotes should be written out in full and their locations in the reading (page and number of lines from top) identified for easy locating.**
- Question: By “question” we mean students should compose one question that the reading raises and that would make for a good discussion starting point. Keep in mind you *may* be asked to read these questions aloud in class to prompt discussion of the assigned reading, though this is up to individual lecturers. Questions should *not* be yes/no type of questions, rhetorical, or future-oriented. Instead questions should be limited to what students will be able to discuss given the information and ideas presented in the reading.
- Each TQQ should be maximum **150-300 words**. For every 50 words the individual TQQ exceeds or is lesser than the prescribed word count, we will lower the final score by 1.0.

E.g., If the content of your TQQ is assessed as an 8.0, but the word length is 350+ words, your final grade will be a 7.0.

Depending on the assessment plan for each individual module, TQQs are assessed either as pass/fail or on a grading scale. Like so:

Pass/Fail

Quality of TQQ

Fail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Failure to submit TQQs. ▪ TQQs demonstrate zero or very slight familiarity with assigned reading. ▪ TQQs demonstrate completion of some or most of assigned reading but no serious critical engagement with ideas introduced by assigned texts.
Pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ TQQs demonstrate completion of all assigned readings and some minimal critical engagement with ideas introduced by assigned texts. ▪ TQQs demonstrate completion of all assigned reading and significant critical engagement with ideas introduced by assigned texts. ▪ TQQs demonstrate thorough digestion of all assigned reading and significant critical engagement with ideas introduced by assigned texts.

Or:

Grade

Quality of TQQ

0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Failure to submit TQQs.
1-2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ TQQs demonstrate zero or very slight familiarity with assigned reading.
3-4.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ TQQs demonstrate completion of some or most of assigned reading but no serious critical engagement with ideas introduced by assigned texts.
5-6.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ TQQs demonstrate completion of all assigned readings and some minimal critical engagement with ideas introduced by assigned texts.
7-8.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ TQQs demonstrate completion of all assigned reading and significant critical engagement with ideas introduced by assigned texts.
9-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ TQQs demonstrate thorough digestion of all assigned reading and significant critical engagement with ideas introduced by assigned texts.

For examples of TQQs, please consult the page “What are TQQs and how do I do them?” in the Theories and Concepts module on CANVAS.

Team-Based Learning

Team-based Learning (TBL) is a structured form of small-group learning that emphasizes student preparation out of class and application of knowledge in class. Throughout the GEST diploma programme, group work is carried out in groups of four to five people and these groups *remain the same throughout the semester*. According to the work of Michaelsen et al (2009) on team-based learning, "*only when students work together over time can their groups become cohesive enough to evolve into self-managed and truly effective learning teams*" (3). This means that while GEST fellows may initially struggle to overcome in-group challenges, persistent structure eventually teaches individual fellows to use their strengths to contribute to a strong and organized group dynamic that can produce consistent quality work.

The groups for 2025 will be assigned during the Orientation module in the beginning of the semester.

If module coordinators assess group work or class participation in their module, it will be done according to the following criteria:

Grade	Quality of participation/involvement
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Absent (or present but disruptive).
1-2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Present, not disruptive but inattentive or uninvolved.▪ Freeriding off other people's work.▪ Demonstrates no or very cursory familiarity with assigned topic.
3-4.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Does not evince completion or significant digestion of assigned topic.▪ Members involved only sporadically in discussion and do not attempt to involve group members.▪ When called upon, offers only straightforward information without elaboration, analysis, or constructive engagement with peers.▪ Derails conversation with unrelated or unhelpful commentary.
5-7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Demonstrates good preparation for class; is familiar with the topic and has thought through implications of some ideas found in reading.▪ Offers some interpretation and analysis of the reading (more than just facts).
7.5-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Evinces excellent preparation of assigned topic.▪ Offers analysis, evaluation and synthesis of ideas.▪ Group members evince leadership while also giving space: Keep analyses focused, builds on previous discussion to nuance debate, responds thoughtfully to group members and other students in a way that contributes to cooperative atmosphere; members bring independent experiences to enhance transnational understandings.

Policy on lateness/absences to class

Attendance at teaching sessions in the GEST programme is compulsory. Fellows are required to attend a **minimum of 90% of classes in each module (not the programme overall)**. If fellows are unable to comply with this requirement, they fail the module in question and thereby the entire

programme. Do not be late. By “late” we mean that if class starts at 09.15, you are required to show up at 09.10 to clock in. Aim to be in class and ready to participate 5 minutes before each class. ***If you are sick, inform your lecturer by email and CC Academic Programme Coordinator Thomas Brorsen Smidt (tbs@hi.is).***

How to use Jibble.

GRÓ GEST uses Jibble to track attendance. Students are required to clock in with the Jibble app's facial recognition software in the classroom up to 5 minutes before the start of each class. The app works with geo-fencing, meaning once you are clocked in the app registers if you leave campus. You will be automatically clocked out at 14.30. Here's how to start using Jibble:

1. Download the Jibble app to your smart device or open Jibble in your web browser.
2. Locate the invitation link sent by GRÓ GEST to your email.
3. Tap on the link.
4. You'll be directed to the Jibble web app signup page.
5. Enter a password and enter any additional details.
6. Click on the Create Account button to finalize your registration and join GRÓ GEST on Jibble!
7. Watch a video with instructions on how to use the mobile app [here](#). Instructions for the web browser are [here](#).

If your Jibble app is not working, or you for some other reason cannot clock in, ***the burden of proof that you attended class is on you***. One way to prove you were in class is to get the instructor of the day to sign a letter for you, stating that you were in class all day, or getting the instructor to email the Academic Programme Coordinator directly, vouching for your active participation.

Policy on late or missing written work

Late assignments will not be accepted and will not receive any credit. Deadlines on written assignments are immovable and absolute. You are responsible for planning ahead and making sure you do not miss deadlines.

Module Descriptions

Theories and Concepts of Gender

Module coordinator: Dr Thomas Brorsen Smidt
Email: tbs@hi.is

An understanding of the basic theories and concepts in international gender studies is a prerequisite for understanding all subsequent modules of the GEST Programme. As such, this module introduces established feminist theoretical traditions as well as more recent feminist conceptualizations relevant to global gender politics. Through a combination of readings, lectures and group assignments, fellows will consider theories in feminist epistemology, masculinity studies, queer theory, decolonial theory, and intersectionality theories as they relate to gender, race, class, religion, and sexuality. Fellows will be encouraged to think critically and about gender from global and transnational feminist theoretical perspectives.

Project Development Tools

Module coordinator: Dr Thomas Brorsen Smidt

Email: aga@hi.is

This module is designed to teach students some key practical skills for developing gender equality projects. Through a combination of lectures, exercises, group discussions, and assignments, students will learn about gender analysis and policy development, gender-responsive budgeting, as well as results-based management and the logical framework approach.

Gender, Violence and Security

Module coordinator: Dr. Giti Chandra

Email: gc@hi.is

The aim of this module is to increase the fellows' ability to understand, discuss, and convey knowledge of gender dimensions of security, especially with regard to international legal obligations, UNSC resolutions, security sector reform and emergency operations, but also in the context of sexual harassment and violence at the workplace, policies, and legal structures. It examines, among other things, the concept of human security versus national security and the role of women in conflicts, peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction, as well as gender-based violence and sexual violence, both as a tactic of warfare as well as a presence in the everyday lives of women and non-binary gendered people. National Action Plans will be of special focus.

Gender, Labour and Migration

Module coordinator: Dr Thomas Brorsen Smidt

Email: gc@hi.is

This module will introduce students to the concepts connected to various types of migration. Students will get a fuller view of migration as it intersects with labour and gender by looking at international agreements and treaties, national laws and policies, global and local responses to migration. The module will also cover global economic imbalances that lead to migration. How migration differentially impacts men and women will also be discussed in light of current theories, research, and agreements. The module will also cover how intersecting factors such as gender, racialization and sexuality impact processes of inclusion and exclusion of migrants in their receiving countries.

Gender, Environment and Climate Change

Module coordinator: Irma Erlingsdóttir

Email: irma@hi.is

The purpose of this module is to examine the role of gender in the context of environment with a focus on climate change. This module will analyse the transformative potential of gender equality to advance environmental sustainability as well as resilience, vulnerability, mitigation, and adaptation to global environmental change. Furthermore, the module outlines the main international commitments regarding environment and climate change and suggests gender sensitive actions. Through the combination of readings, documentaries and lectures, fellows will understand the impact of climate change on gender, both in rural and urban environments as well

as in different geographical contexts. The fellows will be equipped to provide examples of international commitments as well as possible everyday actions to enhance sustainable operations.

The Final Assignment

Module coordinator: Margrét Ann Thors

Email: mat34@hi.is

See next section.

The Final Assignment

The final assignment is an important part of the GRÓ GEST diploma programme. The fellows work on it throughout their time in Iceland. In most cases, the final assignment takes the form of a project proposal that outlines a plan of action with all the necessary steps and activities needed to address and solve the problem. In special cases, when a fellow has an especially strong academic background, it may take the form of a research or research proposal. Fellows that have joined GRÓ GEST via ERASMUS may choose to write an essay based on existing data that will conclude during the fellow's stay in Iceland.

Fellows apply to the GRÓ GEST programme with their idea for a final assignment, and they are selected on the basis hereof. Therefore, it is not possible to change the topic of your final assignment after you have been selected to the GRÓ GEST programme.

Fellows work on their project for the duration of the programme under the supervision of expert supervisors. The purpose of the final project is for fellows to reflect on some of the theories, methods, and skills studied during the programme, to consider when these would be appropriate and to apply them in a practical or research context. At the end of the semester, the fellows present the design and findings of their assignments at an open seminar organized by GEST. Throughout the Module, fellows attend sessions on academic writing, reference systems for literature review and research, introduction to the university library, professional development, and how to deliver professional presentations.

What we expect of supervisors:	What we expect of fellows:
Meet with the fellow once before the start of the programme, and at least four (4) times during the Spring semester to discuss the project and its progress. The supervisor is <i>not</i> responsible for setting up meetings.	Proactively contact the assigned supervisor, well in advance to set up meetings.
	Show up to all scheduled meetings on time. In very special cases when there are no other options, a fellow may consult with GEST staff to be excused from regular classes for the purpose of meeting in person with their supervisor.
Work with the fellow on a plan to complete the assignment on time. Discuss the fellow-supervisor relationship and what to expect throughout. The supervisor is <i>not</i> expected to	Work with the supervisor on a plan to complete the assignment on time and follow the plan. Discuss the fellow-supervisor relationship and what to expect throughout.

provide information about Iceland, the GEST programme, travel, etc.	
Respond promptly (at most within 1 week) to messages from the fellow -- within reason! The supervisor is <i>not</i> expected to be at the fellow's beck and call 24/7.	Work independently on the assignment, seeking advice when needed but not incessantly. Continue working while waiting for the supervisor's response to questions or requests.
Give guidance to the fellow in framing and structuring the assignment.	Be receptive to guidance by supervisor, but do not expect direction on the minutiae of analyzing the subject or writing the assignment.
Give guidance regarding the scope of the assignment, including the necessity of limiting the scope if the fellow proposes an assignment that is too wide or otherwise too large to complete within the given timeframe.	Understand that the assignment is required to be 20-25 pages long. Assignments may be longer, but that is the choice of the fellow. Regardless of its size, the assignment must be turned in by the deadline. Be realistic.
Advise the fellow on source material as needed and/or where to find it.	Understand that <u>the fellow</u> is responsible for every aspect of their final projects, from picking a topic to submitting the completed work. This may include, but not be limited to, finding and analysing sources, collecting and analysing data, writing the text, citing sources correctly, completing any and all tables used, finding appropriate images as needed, formatting the assignment according to a template.
Inform the fellow in advance if the supervisor will be unavailable to perform supervisory duties on certain days/time periods during the spring semester 2025.	Inform the supervisor of all relevant deadlines regarding the final assignment, and, as needed, other responsibilities that will impact the fellow's work on the final assignment.
Be available to read and comment very promptly on final drafts of the assignment during the two weeks leading up to the deadline on May 4.	
Read and give comments/advice on the assignment's design, outline, drafts and final version, keeping in mind that GRÓ GEST fellows are subject to very tight deadlines and do <i>not</i> have the opportunity to postpone turning in an assignment to a later semester.	Understand that it is absolutely not possible to postpone the submission of the Final Assignment. The assignment will be assessed based on what has been turned in by 23:59 on Sunday, 4 May 2025
Give guidance regarding the language of the assignment but do not write for the fellow. Refer fellow to the University of Iceland Writing Center as needed.	Seek assistance at the University of Iceland Writing Center if in need of assistance with the English language, source citation and assignment formatting beyond what is available in the FA classes and material.

<p>Contact academic coordinator Thomas Brorsen Smidt (tbs@hi.is) if any issues arise that cannot be solved among the supervisor and fellow, including but not limited to:</p> <p>Communication breakdown between fellow and supervisor; a change in circumstances that requires the supervisor to drop out of the arrangement; inappropriate behavior on part of the fellow; failure on part of the fellow to respond to supervision leading the supervisor to believe that the assignment will not be ready by the deadline; inability of supervisor to advise on particular aspects of the fellow's assignment, e.g. methodology; inability of fellow to understand direction; any severe language difficulty that may negatively impact completion of the assignment; failure on part of the fellow to seek necessary assistance, e.g. at writing center.</p>	<p>Contact academic coordinator Thomas Brorsen Smidt (tbs@hi.is) if any issues arise that cannot be solved among the supervisor and fellow, including but not limited to:</p> <p>Communication breakdown between fellow and supervisor; inappropriate behavior on part of the supervisor; failure on part of the supervisor to respond to e-mail in a timely manner (1 week); inability of fellow to understand supervisor's direction; inability of fellow to access the writing center if in need of language assistance.</p>
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The Vigdís Finnbogadóttir Award

Each year, *up to* two graduating fellows within the GRÓ GEST programme will receive the Vigdís Finnbogadóttir Award. The award is presented in two distinct categories. The first category is for applied projects or project documents, in which the fellow addresses and provides practical recommendations for an issue in relation to gender equality in their home country. The second category is for research or research proposals, which aim at contributing to the existing academic literature on a particular topic relating to gender equality or outlining a proposal for a future PhD project.

The award bears the name of Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, the former president of Iceland and the patron of the GEST Programme. She was both Iceland's and Europe's first female president and the world's first democratically elected female president. With a presidency of exactly sixteen years, she remains the longest-serving elected female head of state of any country. Women's rights, cultural diversity, the promotion of world peace, and transnational dialogues have been running themes in Vigdís Finnbogadóttir's work, as has her emphasis on gender equality and the empowerment of women.



GEST sets out the following criteria for assignments to be considered for the award: The assignment must show evidence of sophisticated gender analysis with appropriate academic references and be well structured and written. The assignment also must provide recommendations that address gender issues that are of concern in the fellow's home country.

From the left: Vigdís Finnbogadóttir with GEST fellows Nadhiya Najab and Brenda Apeta, and Rector of the University of Iceland Dr. Jón Atli Benediktsson

A panel of scholars from the University of Iceland reviews the final assignments of GEST fellows by the end of the semester, makes recommendations for the final grades for the final assignment and their presentation, and selects the candidate for the Vigdís Finnbogadóttir Award.

Plagiarism

GEST considers plagiarism a form of academic misconduct and does not allow any practice that involves taking and using another person's work and claiming it as one's own. It is the responsibility of students to ensure that all work submitted towards assessment and grading is the student's own, and that it includes proper referencing and citation using the accepted referencing system.

All students will be made aware of the unethical nature of plagiarism by Final Assignment module coordinator Margrét Ann Thors and will receive additional guidance and training in academic writing and referencing systems.

To detect plagiarism, including the unethical use of AI technologies, GEST uses the prevention system **Turnitin**, which compares students' papers against extensive databases of material.

If GEST find that there is evidence of plagiarism or cheating in an examination, it will alert the Head of Faculty, who will investigate the matter. They will summon the fellow for an interview, allowing them an opportunity to express their opinion, while making it clear that the Dean of the School of Humanities has the final say in the matter on behalf of the University.

If the fellow is found guilty of behaviour which goes against the Public Higher Education Institutions Act No. 85/2008, or regulations and rules based on the Act, the Dean of School may reprimand the student or suspend them from their studies, temporarily or for good, depending on the seriousness of the offence.

The student has the right to appeal the Dean's decision to the Board of Appeal for students' complaints, cf. Article 51 of Regulation no. 569/2009. Such an appeal defers the execution of the Dean's decision. See also Article 19 of the Public Higher Education Institutions Act.

On the use of AI Technologies

The GRÓ GEST Programme emphasizes integrity, independent learning, and skill development in all aspects of academic work. **GEST considers the unethical use of AI tools a form of plagiarism and applies the rules above in each case it is detected.** Therefore, as you navigate your coursework and assignments, it is important to understand the ethical boundaries when using AI tools, like Grammarly (see next section).

As a rule: ***Never ask an AI to do something for you that you would not ask your smartest friend to do for you.*** Would you ask your friend to go over your paper and provide suggestions for improvements? Of course. Would you ask your friend to rewrite your paper in a different style? No, that would be cheating.

Here's how you can ethically use AI while meeting the learning outcomes of the GEST programme, and without Turnitin flagging your work as plagiarised.

1. Actively engage with suggestions. It is acceptable to use AI tools like Grammarly to improve your grammar and writing style, but you must review each suggestion and decide which to accept or reject. The goal is to learn from the process, not to let the AI do the work for you.

2. Use AI as a learning aid, not a replacement. You may ask AI for help with specific aspects of your writing, such as offering alternative titles, identifying confusing sections, or providing grammar corrections. The key is to use these tools to enhance your understanding and skills, not to replace your own effort.

3. Maintain integrity in your work. Achieving the learning outcomes of the programme, such as applying theoretical frameworks, collecting data, and writing coherent and reflexive assignments, requires that you complete these tasks independently. Outsourcing significant portions of your work to AI tools undermines your learning and the programme's goals.

Examples of Ethical AI Use:

- Asking for grammar fixes in a paragraph.
- Requesting feedback on clarity and logic.
- Seeking alternatives for titles or synonyms to improve tone.
- Asking for suggestions on transition words.

Examples of Unethical AI Use:

- Asking AI to rewrite sections of your paper to make them sound better or more professional.
- Having AI write content for you (paragraphs, sections, etc.).
- Requesting that AI make your writing sound like a native speaker's without your involvement in the process.

Finally, it is essential mention that **Turnitin** includes a feature to detect improper use of AI technologies, such as ChatGPT.

Grammarly

GRÓ GEST offers to reimburse its fellows for a 3-month subscription to the AI tool Grammarly, which can be immensely helpful in developing academic writing skills. If you wish to take advantage of this offer, you should pay for a 3-month subscription, download Grammarly, and then send the receipt and bank statement to operations manager Guðrún Eysteinsdóttir (guðruney@hi.is). GEST does not reimburse subscriptions to any other AI tools, nor does it reimburse anything other than a single 3-month subscription. This means GEST will not reimburse three separate 1-month subscriptions, nor will it reimburse 1/3 of a 12-month subscription.

As the deadline for the final assignment is in the first half of May each year, we recommend starting your 3-month Grammarly subscription in mid-February.

Access to study material: University of Iceland Intra-Web (UGLA and CANVAS)

Upon your arrival to Iceland, you will receive a kennitala (Icelandic ID number). This allows you to request a student login and password from the Service Desk at the University Centre (at Háskólatorg, right beside the bookstore). The login provides access to the internet within the university area and in student housing.

The student login provides access to UGLA (the Owl), the University of Iceland's intranet. On UGLA, students can monitor the progress of their studies and access a variety of information regarding their academic life such as daily news, university calendar and upcoming events, as well as information on courses. Access to UGLA is here: <https://ugla.hi.is/>

Please watch this short [introduction video](#) to UGLA to get familiar with it.

The [UTS \(=Division of Information Technology\) Youtube Channel](#) contains several more helpful videos and you can find an elaborate UGLA handbook after you logged in, [here](#).

CANVAS is the main online teaching platform for GEST where all course material can be accessed, projects and papers are submitted, etc. You can access CANVAS via UGLA or go to <https://CANVAS.hi.is> and use the same login and password as for UGLA.

It is important to familiarise yourself with UGLA and CANVAS as you will use them every day. In case you have any questions, consult with other fellows or other students in the student housing before reaching out to the UGLA IT service.

The National and University Library

The [National and University Library of Iceland](#) provides students and faculties of University of Iceland with library services.

Library cards are free for UI students and students have priority in the library's reading facilities and small meeting rooms during exams. In addition, UI students get a 50% discount on various paid services at the library, such as interlibrary loans, etc.

The library's opening hours are:

Until 7 May:

Monday to Thursday: 8:15-22:00

Friday: 8:15-19:00

Saturday: 10:00-17:00

Sunday: 11:00-17:00

From 8 May

Monday to Friday: 9:00-17:00

Saturday: 10.00-14.00

Sunday: Closed

Icelandic Student Services (Félagsstofnun stúdenta – FS)

The Icelandic Student Services is a service company for students at the University of Iceland. It operates student housing on campus, Student Career Centre, University Book Store, Student Cafes, preschools, and Háma (campus cafeteria). The FS head office is on the upper floor of Háskólatorg at Sæmundargata 4. The opening hours are Mondays-Thursdays 9:00-16:00, and Fridays 9:00-12:00. The phone number is +352 5700 700 and the e-mail address fs@fs.is.

The University Book Store

The University Book Store is located in Háskólatorg (University Centre) where educational materials and stationary are available.

University Service Desk and IT Help Desk

The University's Service Desk and Computer Services Help Desk are both located in Háskólatorg. The Service Desk is where student ID and access cards can be picked up, and is a point of access for all general student services of the University, including student registry (certificates etc.), sports facilities (gym passes) and more. At the [IT Help Desk](#) students can receive assistance with internet connections and other computer related issues.

The University Sport Facilities

The [University of Iceland Sport Facilities](#) at Sæmundargata is open to all students and staff for a low price. The gymnasium offers timetabled group lessons in the hall and equipment and facilities

for various cardiovascular exercises, CrossFit, bodybuilding, and powerlifting, in addition to a space for yoga and flexibility work. Groups can rent the hall for ball games etc. A sauna is in the basement of the gymnasium building.

Opening hours are Monday-Thursday 7:00-22:00, Friday's 07:00-20:00, and Saturday 8:00-18:00. The building is closed on Sundays.

Gym passes provide access to all the sport facilities, including open sessions in the hall, fitness suite and sauna. You can purchase passes for ISK 12,000 at the service desk at Háskólatorg. The pass will be valid throughout your stay in Iceland.

Campus Cafeteria and Student Cafes

There is a canteen and cafeteria on campus, [Háma](#), in Háskólatorg. Háma is open on weekdays, 8:00-17:00, and on Saturdays from 9:00-15:00. Háma provides food, beverages, and hot lunch. Your student card gives you a discount in Háma for the hot lunch as well as coffee. There are also smaller café's in some of the other buildings.

The [Student Cellar \(Stúdentakjallarinn\)](#), located in the cellar of Háskólatorg is a bar and a restaurant where students, and often staff as well, gather for social events such as concerts, movies or just to have food or drinks. The Student Cellar is open Monday to Wednesday from 11:00 to 23:00, Thursday - Saturday from 11:00 to 01:00, and Sunday from 14:00 to 23:00. The Kitchen is open until 21:30 every day.

Printing

GEST encourages you to print as little as possible. Please consider the environment before printing any materials. If you absolutely need to print, you can do so at the University of Iceland in different places. Please find more information about how to go about printing [here](#). Scanning is free while printing costs ISK 7 per page B/W and ISK 35 per page of colour.

PRACTICAL ISSUES ABOUT YOUR ARRIVAL IN ICELAND

During the first weeks at GEST, fellows are required to finalize the residence permit process by visiting the Directorate of Immigration for fingerprinting, photographing and to declare their residence, and by undergoing a comprehensive health check required of all immigrants whether temporary or long-term. This process is organized and facilitated by GEST staff. This year health checks take place on **January 7 to 9 at 09:00 am all days** (fellows go in three different groups). The appointments at the Directorate of Immigration for the photo/fingerprinting/residence declaration, will take place on **January 8 and 9, at 12:40 pm each day** (fellows go in two groups). Appointment times for each fellow will be announced at or before arrival in Iceland.

Once the immigration process has been finalized, you will, hopefully within no more than 2 – 4 weeks, have your Icelandic ID number (*kennitala* in Icelandic) activated, which is a prerequisite for all registration systems of the Icelandic Government and the University (electronic ID, bank account, UGLA, CANVAS). Upon activation of the *kennitala*, fellows must open an Icelandic bank account.

Also, during your first days you will sign a contract with the Student Housing Office, located in Háskólatorg. You will also receive a student login and password to access the internet from your rooms as well as to access the “eduroam” network on campus. In addition, Erasmus+ exchange fellows will sign their Erasmus+ agreement at the university’s International Office. More details will be provided in your welcome folder upon arrival.

Throughout the programme, the GEST team might need to contact you. This will be done principally through the e-mail address you will get through the University of Iceland. We will post announcements on CANVAS (the university teaching platform) when needed. Make sure you check your e-mail regularly (clear up space when your account is about to fill up). Please bring your mobile phones with you. GEST will provide you with an Icelandic SIM card with a small amount of credit so you will be able to contact your family upon arrival. After that, you will be responsible for additional credit for your phone throughout the semester.

If your friends and relatives have access to the internet, we strongly advise you to communicate with them either via e-mail or by using Zoom, Skype, Viber, WhatsApp, Messenger or similar, and to **use the available wi-fi network** on campus (eduroam) and in student housing whenever possible, as 3G/4G credit is quite expensive.

Travelling to Iceland

GEST books your flights and sends you the e-ticket.

Travel documents

Proof of citizenship is required for international travel. Be sure to bring all necessary documentation (e.g. passport, visa, transit permit, receipts, vaccination certificates, etc.) and keep it readily accessible. Also bring a printed copy of your e-ticket, and of your invitation letter from GEST and the University of Iceland. **Never pack any of these important travel documents in**

your checked luggage; they should all be in your carry-on bag, and the same, of course, applies to any money or bank cards you may be carrying, and your university documents.

Visa and residence permit

The visa obtained in advance at the issuing embassy is a travel visa and is only valid for 90 days. This means that this visa allows you to travel through Schengen countries to enter Iceland within these 90 days. Once you get to Iceland, GEST will facilitate finalizing your application with the Directorate of Immigration for a residence permit. The residence permit is valid until June/July 2025 (the exact date will be in your decision letter from the DoI) and will allow you to travel through other Schengen countries on your way back home.

Baggage

GEST provides airline tickets with one (1) piece of checked luggage. Baggage allowance and policies differ by airlines. It is important that you follow your airlines' baggage restrictions, including allowed maximum weight and dimensions. It is likely that you will need to travel using more than one airline – please check the restrictions for *all* of the airlines you will be using. If you choose to bring additional luggage, you will need to cover the costs yourself at the airport, or in advance if possible.

Please put a tag on your bag(s) with your name and contact details. The destination address is: GRÓ GEST, University of Iceland, Saemundargata 10, 102 Reykjavík, Iceland. Tags are usually provided at the check-in desk at the airport. It is also a good idea to tape an index card or piece of paper with the same information, including also your home address, to the inside of your bag(s), in case the tag gets torn off. You should also make sure to keep your baggage receipt, which is a small sticker attached either to your boarding pass or passport when you check-in. This little receipt is very important in case your bag is lost. If your luggage gets lost while you are travelling, the airlines are usually responsible for delivering your bags to your residence once in Iceland. In the unlikely event that this happens, you will have to notify the information desk at the airport, by the baggage claim, before exiting the airport terminal.

Travel to airport and costs en-route

As a GEST fellow, you are responsible for your travel to the airport. The GEST programme does not cover cost of meals during your travel or reimburse any costs if you do not have proof of purchase (receipts). Keep all receipts for later reimbursement but note that GEST may not reimburse all claimed costs. The fellowship's daily allowance will be calculated from the day you arrive in Iceland but not for any prior days of travel. We recommend that you have some funds available to at least be able to purchase food and drink during the journey.

Check-in

Check-in times vary between airports, but it is generally recommended to be at the airport no later than two and half hours before your departure. In some cases, more time is advised. You may be able to check in online in advance, or by using a self-service machine at the airport terminal and dropping your bags off at a baggage drop desk. Otherwise go to the check-in desk designated for your flight. Depending on your ticket you may be able to check in for more than one flight (for instance from Kampala to Nairobi *and* from Nairobi to Amsterdam, and even all the way to Keflavik airport in Iceland). It is good to consult with the staff at the check-in desk whether you can check

your luggage in the whole way to Iceland, or if you need to pick up your baggage when you arrive at a connecting airport and check it in again for your next flight.

Boarding

Boarding time is usually indicated on your boarding pass and on information screens at the airport. On the boarding pass and/or screen you will also see your gate number. Please note that airports do not all have boarding calls. While in transit, the time between flights can sometimes be short and some airlines require the passengers to be at the gate well in time. It is your responsibility to be by your gate in good time before boarding.

Arrival

When you arrive in Iceland you will be picked up at the airport by a taxi or bus and driven to your residence. The driver will have a sign indicating that she/he is from GEST and will know your destination. GEST staff will meet you at the residence with the keys to your room in student housing.

What to bring?

Clothes

You will arrive in Iceland in mid-winter and stay until late spring. The weather in Iceland is variable, and it is especially windy. Storms and blizzards are all part of the winter experience, while summers are surprisingly cold to most people. There is also, as you will probably find out the hard way, a grain of truth to the joke that it rains horizontally in Iceland. If possible, it is a good idea to pack good quality boots (sturdy with good grip), warm clothes (wool or fleece); coats or jackets that are warm, wind- and rainproof, as well as sweaters, hats, scarves, woolly socks and gloves or mittens. All of these items can also be purchased in Iceland, but they are often very expensive unless purchased second-hand or at charity shops, *so if you have them*, bring them.

Even though it can be cold and windy outside, the houses are usually warm and cosy. This is because they are well insulated and heated with geothermal water. It is a good idea to dress in layers, so that you can take your warmer things off when you are inside and then put them on as needed once you go outside. We also recommend bringing swimwear and towels. The swimming pools in Iceland are nice and warm and open year-round, and going for a swim is a very local thing to do. Bedding – including duvets, pillows, sheets, and covers will be provided by GEST.

Food

We understand that you may want to bring some local food items with you but this can be problematic both in transit and when arriving in Iceland as there are strict regulations about importation of certain food products. Be aware that any food you bring may be confiscated. Note that importing animal products to Iceland for personal consumption from non-EEA states is strictly regulated and restricted. For more information, please see the [website of the Icelandic Food and Veterinary Authority](#).

Computers and communication

There are also several computer laboratories in buildings around the University of Iceland campus which are all accessible to students. Please find the location of the computer labs [here](#).

You will be provided with most of the basic readings by the teachers via CANVAS, the online learning management system. Please note that you cannot use the internet from your room on campus until you have signed the housing contract. That can take up to a week or two. However, you can use the internet (eduroam) from other areas of the campus from the day you receive the student login. You can also access eduroam in the shared kitchens of the student housing. Find instructions [here](#).

PRACTICAL INFORMATION ABOUT LIVING IN ICELAND

Accommodation

During your stay in Iceland, you will be living in student housing at the University of Iceland campus. You have been allocated individual rooms by the Student Services (FS) at Oddagarðar and Mýrargarður on Sæmundargata. It is possible this may change, but not likely.

In all residencies, a bed, a desk and a chair, and a closet are provided in each room. The residents of 7-10 rooms share a kitchen which is fully equipped. The buildings have a common laundry room and a bicycle storage facility on the ground floor of each house. All rooms are connected to the internet via the University of Iceland's ethernet and internet connection (HI-net/Garðanet).

Fellows are required to clean their own rooms on a regular basis. Before departing Iceland, the rooms need to be cleaned very thoroughly.

GEST is pleased to provide you with accommodation and bedding as a part of your scholarship but expects in return that the fellows respect their new home by keeping the facilities in order. Regular tidying, including cleaning rooms, bathrooms, and bedding contributes to your good health and well-being during your stay in Iceland. If the rooms are left in poor shape by the end of the semester, the Student Housing and Services can be expected to require that you pay for extra cleaning – which can be very expensive.

Therefore, we want to encourage you to clean your rooms once per week (but at least every two weeks as a bare minimum) by:

- Sweeping/washing the floors and wiping off the dust
- Washing the bed linen (bed sheet, duvet cover and pillowcases)
- Clean the bathrooms: the toilet, sink, shower, and floor as well as the shower curtain every now and then – it can go into the washing machine on 30°.

Always use the bed linen (pillowcases, duvet covers, mattress cover and sheet) to protect the mattresses and duvets/pillows from getting dirty. If you want extra bed linen, please approach GEST staff for additional items.

Please ask your fellow students at your residence, especially those who have lived there for some time, for advice on how to access cleaning products and equipment. Some will be made available to you by Student housing, while you will need to purchase some for yourselves. If something is not clear, please do not hesitate to contact GEST staff.

Strict house rules apply in student housing, and we ask you all to acquaint yourselves with them when you arrive.

SMOKING IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN IN ANY STUDENT HOUSING; THIS INCLUDES YOUR PERSONAL ROOM. Please abide by the rules posted in common areas of the residencies.

Emergency telephone number

The emergency telephone number for police, ambulance or fire is **112**.

General Business Hours

The opening hours of most businesses are from 9:00 until 17:00.

Shopping hours are generally from 9:00, 10:00, or 11:00 until 17:00 or 18:00 during the week (Monday to Friday). On Saturdays, many shops are open only for a few hours from 10:00 or 11:00. Most shops are closed on Sundays except for grocery stores and larger malls.

Banking hours are from approximately 9:00 or 10:00 to 16:00, Monday to Friday only, and banks are closed both Saturdays and Sundays. Since most banking is done online, though, you will rarely or perhaps never need to visit a bank branch in person.

Finances

The scholarship is sufficient to cover the cost of food and other daily needs. You need to apply for your own Icelandic bank account. You will be provided with more detailed information in the welcome folder upon your arrival. When your bank account has been established, you will receive a debit card for your use. Your scholarship money will be transferred into your account every month. To cover the first several weeks, until you can open a bank account, you will receive a prepaid debit card.

The unit of currency used in Iceland is the Króna or “crown,” abbreviated ISK or kr. Most shops and businesses accept major credit- and debit cards so it is not generally necessary or even advisable to carry cash. Debit and credit cards are commonly used in Iceland even for small transactions. The major credit cards used in Iceland are VISA and Eurocard/Mastercard but Diners and American Express are also accepted by some businesses in Iceland. It is best to exchange any cash money you bring into ISK *in* Iceland, and re-exchange any surplus before you leave, as foreign banks may not deal in ISK. You can exchange your money at the bank at the airport on arrival and departure and in all major banks.

Please note that it is a good idea to bring some Euros or US dollars with you to use while in transit in Europe and (after exchanging to ISK) over the first several days when you arrive. On some of the flights you may also have to pay for your meals on board.

On campus, there is an ATM in Háskólatorg.

Getting Around

Já

Já is a telephone directory of businesses and individuals in Iceland. The online directory, www.ja.is also offers links to websites and on-map locations and is therefore a very useful resource. There is also a já app available in most phone-app-stores. Fun fact: Já, in Icelandic, pronounced “yow” (rhymes with “cow”), means yes.

Transportation

When it comes to public transportation, Reykjavík has a bus system (called Strætó in Icelandic) with regular services to and from all of the city’s major neighbourhoods and attractions as well as

neighbouring towns. The bus system also offers travel outside the area, albeit less frequently and for a higher price.

Strætó lists all routes and schedules online at www.bus.is or www.straeto.is. All purchase of tickets is done through The Klapp at <https://www.klappid.is/en> or via the KLAPP app. GEST is pleased to provide you with a KLAPP card and period passes to cover your in-town bus needs during your stay. More information will be provided in the welcome folder you will find in your residence upon arrival.

Other transportation

Iceland does not have Uber, Bolt, Lyft or similar services, and taxis are quite expensive in Iceland. Hreyfill (phone: 588 5522) and BSR (phone: 561 0000) can be called for shorter rides when needed. Both companies also offer free smart phone apps to order fares. You can expect to pay up to a full day's allowance or more for a fare during weekends or at night, or for longer rides during weekdays, so we recommend using buses or walking for most of your needs.

Companies such as [Hopp](#) and [Zolo](#) operate electric scooters which can be rented using smartphone apps after you enter your debit card information. This may at times be convenient for shorter rides, but the costs will quickly build up if you use them a lot, so be careful! Like driving, the scooters and bicycles should *never* be used while under any influence, which can impair your ability to operate a vehicle! Also, helmets are mandatory. scooters should never be used in slippery conditions, such as when there is snow or ice on the ground. There have been several serious accidents involving electric scooters, especially when it is dark and/or conditions are slippery.

For bus tours outside of the city, see either the services offered by straeto or www.bsi.is, the central bus station. Domestic flights are offered by [Icelandair](#) and [Eagle Air](#). There are several car rentals in Reykjavik for those who wish to rent a car for exploring Iceland. Please make sure that your driver's license is valid for driving in Iceland if you are interested in renting a car.

In case you plan to travel around Iceland by yourself it is very important to check safetravel.is, vedur.is, and road.is. These websites publish travel warnings as well as information about road conditions and weather. Make sure to always check them before leaving Reykjavík.

Health Issues

As the climate in Iceland is different from what most of you are used to, please make sure to do everything to stay happy and healthy. We recommend going for short walks every day (while it is light out), eating healthy and nutritious food and getting enough sleep. As there will not be much daylight during the first months of your stay in Iceland, we recommend that you to take Vitamin D. Vitamin D deficiency is very common in Iceland due to the lack of daylight. Most Icelanders grow up taking Lýsi, which is rich in vitamins and omega3. You can get it in the grocery store.

In case you have a sore throat or a cold, we recommend that you stay hydrated, drink hot ginger tea with honey and try to get some sleep. You can get some cold medicine, nasal spray or throat tablets in the pharmacy without a doctor's prescription. If you develop a fever or the cold/pain continues over days, we recommend that you stay home and warm. If you haven't gotten better within a few days, we recommend that you either call or go and see a nurse or doctor at the health clinic.



Examples of Vitamin D

If you are feeling sick and cannot come to class, you need to send an e-mail to gest@hi.is and the module coordinator and state the reason why you are not able to come to class.

Medical insurance

Please note that the medical insurance covered by GEST is useful **for emergency cases only**, for example if you have an accident or acutely need to be admitted to a hospital during your stay in Iceland. You are insured for up to 2,000,000 Icelandic krónas (ISK) (around 13,650 EUR) but there is a deductible of the amount of 50,000 ISK (around 340 EUR as of October 2023). The deductible or 'own risk' amount of 50,000 ISK means that in case you need to go to the hospital or a health centre, you must cover the cost yourself until you accumulate costs of 50,000 ISK and can prove this with receipts. After costs have reached 50,000 ISK the insurance will cover them up to 2,000,000 ISK. If you need to visit a health centre/GP due to cold or a fever, you will need to pay for that yourself out of your daily allowance (the cost for this can be 10,000 ISK or more).

The insurance does not cover any pre-existing conditions, such as chronic illnesses and diseases that you might already have. In case you are battling a chronic illness or are being treated by regularly taking medications, it is important to bring all necessary medications that you are using with you to Iceland for the entire 5-month period, since it can be difficult and very expensive to obtain them in Iceland.

Do not come to Iceland if you have a medical condition that you know you will need hospitalization for, as the cost of a night in hospital can easily be around 1 million ISK and if it is for a condition you already have before the insurance is activated, you will need to pay this out of pocket.

When traveling from areas where malaria is endemic, please make sure to have a test before leaving your home country and have proper treatment there if needed, as health facilities in Iceland might not easily detect malaria cases, medication is not easily available, and it is expensive. Consider that the same may be true for other diseases that may be common in your home countries or areas but are rarely seen in Iceland (and other arctic regions).

The insurance does not cover costs of contraception or any cost due to pregnancy, such as maternal or prenatal health care, birthing or abortion, or diseases/conditions which may be related to pregnancy or miscarriage, even if a pregnancy occurs after the insurance is activated.

Sexual Health

Contraception is easily accessible in Iceland. Condoms are affordable and can be bought in supermarkets and pharmacies and the birth control pill can be prescribed by the general practitioner at the health clinic (but is more costly). The morning-after pill can be bought in the pharmacy without a prescription and the same is true for home pregnancy tests. If at any time you suspect you may be pregnant or have contracted an STD, please do not hesitate to swiftly seek assistance at the health clinic.

Menstrual hygiene products such as tampons, pads, and cups can be found in supermarkets and pharmacies. Re-usable pads and period proof underwear are not as widely available but can for example be found in Vistvera on Efstaland 26, 108 Reykjavík and Sambúðin on Síðumúli 11, 108 Reykjavík.

Health Clinic

Your nearest clinic is the Seltjarnarnes Health Clinic ([Heilsugæslan Seltjarnarnesi og Vesturbæ](#)), Suðurströnd, 170 Seltjarnarnes, tel. 513-6100 and e-mail: seltjarnarnes@heilsugaeslan.is

Take bus nr. 11 from the National Library (Seltjarnarnes direction) to the “Íþróttamiðstöð Seltjarnarness” stop (first stop after the “Eiðistorg” shopping center stop) and walk a short way up the hill.

The clinic is open Monday to Friday from 08.00-17.00. Phone hours are from 08.00-16.00. Here you can book an appointment or speak to a nurse. The number is 513-1700. Telephone advice is free of charge.

An appointment with a doctor at the clinic costs approximately 12-15,000 ISK, probably more if same-day. You will be asked for your personal ID number (kennitala) when you call, and you will need to explain that you are not yet in their system because you are a recent resident and not in the national health insurance system. If you get medicine prescribed, it will be registered in your kennitala and you can go to any pharmacy to pick it up. You will be required to present identification. Please note, that you will need to pay for the medicine. We advise you to bring any regularly needed medicine with you to Iceland as the same medicine might be unavailable in Iceland and even if available, it may be very expensive.

If you need a doctor later in the evening or on the weekend, there is a clinic *Læknavaktin* in Austurver (Háaleitisbraut 68) 103 Reykjavík, tel. 1770, laeknavaktin@laeknavaktin.is (15-20 minute drive from campus) that is open between 17:00 and 22:00 on weekdays and 9:00-22:00 on weekends and on public holidays. You do not need to make an appointment, but if you wish to call the clinic beforehand, you can call 1700 and a nurse will advise you. You can check the Straeto

website to see exact bus routes. The health advice phone number 1700 can be called 24/7 and is free of charge.

For emergencies, call 112.

Pharmacies

Pharmacies are listed in the telephone directory (yellow pages: www.ja.is) under "Apótek" and are normally open: Monday-Friday: 9:00-18:00 and Saturdays 9:00-16:00, with a few open later and on Sundays.

The nearest pharmacies to the University are:

[Apótekarinn](#) at Eiðistorg 17, Seltjarnarnes. Opening hours are Monday-Friday 10:00-18:00. [Lyfja](#) at Fiskislóð 3 and [Lyf & heilsa](#) at Fiskislóð 1. Opening hours are 8:00-24:00 every day for Lyfja and 8:00-22:00 Mon-Fri/10:00-22:00 Sat-Sun for Lyf&heilsa. Lyf&heilsa is also in Kringlan shopping mall, easily reached by bus, open during mall hours, and Lyfja is in Hafnarstræti, down town, open 9-18 weekdays and 11-16 Saturdays.

University Psychological Counselling

The University of Iceland offers short-term, individual counselling for psychological problems. You are required to make an appointment well in advance. Find more information [here](#).

Stígamót: Education and Counselling Center for Survivors of Sexual Abuse and Violence

[Stígamót](#) provides free individual counselling for survivors of rape, sexual molestation, sexual harassment, pornographic exploitation and prostitution. The service is available for people of all genders. The people at Stígamót do not identify themselves as providers of traditional therapy, but rather as a support and counselling service for those seeking to learn and engage in self-help. Often people seek support many years after they were violated. It is never too late to begin the healing process.

Stígamót is located at Höfðabakki 9A, 110, Reykjavík, opening hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 9:00-16:00, Thursday 11:00-16:00. Questions can be sent by email or information requested by phone. Phone number: 562-6868, e-mail: stigamot@stigamot.is.

Shopping

There are several shopping malls in the Reykjavik area. Kringlan, Smáralind, and Holtagarða. None is within easy walking distance from campus, but both are readily accessible by bus. There are also many outlet stores in the **Skeifan** area, a 15-minute bus ride from the student housing. The outlet store Regatta in Grandi is great for outdoor clothing.

In the downtown area, **Laugavegur** and its surroundings, which is about a 20-minute walk from the University campus, you can find boutiques, designer labels, arts and crafts galleries as well as pharmacies and grocery stores, and many cafes and restaurants.

There are lots of second-hand stores downtown with a nice and cheap variety of clothes, which we highly recommend for you to get warm winter clothes, coats or shoes: [Hertex](#), [Red Cross Store](#), [Fatamarkaðurinn](#), [Flóamarkaður Konukots](#), and more. [Verzlanahöllin](#) and [Hringekjan](#) are a kind of consignment stores that often have very good quality items at a good price.

Every Saturday and Sunday throughout the year, from 11:00-17:00, Reykjavik's flea market [Kolaportið](#) is located at Tryggvagata down by the harbour. There you can get a variety of second-hand clothes, books, and some local food at a lower price.

Groceries

For groceries, prices differ considerably between stores. There is a small convenience store, [Krambúðin](#), on campus, which is much more expensive than supermarkets found in the city. As it's close by and open late and on weekends it can be convenient if you urgently need something.



The most popular and inexpensive supermarkets are [Bónus](#), [Nettó](#), and [Krónan](#), but you may need to find specialty stores for spices and food items from home. Stores that sell a variety of Asian, Middle Eastern as well as African products are Mai Thai on Laugavegur, Vietnam Market on Suðurlandsbraut, Dai Phat Supermarket on Faxafen, Istanbul Market on Grensásvegur, and AfroZone Ehf on Lóuhólar.



Closest supermarkets and grocery stores to the student housing:

- **Krónan** at Hallveigarstígur 1, 101 Reykjavík.
- **Bónus** at Laugavegur 59, 101 Reykjavík.
- **Krónan, Nettó** and **Bónus** at Grandi – Fiskislóð, 101 Reykjavík.
- **Krambúðin convenience store** at Eggertsgata 24 on campus (see above). It is considerably more expensive than Bónus or Krónan and has little fresh food, but it is the nearest shop.
- [Melabúðin](#) at Hagamelur 39. A very cosy local grocery store next to the neighbourhood swimming pool, but rather expensive.

Alcohol

Wine, liquor and beer can ONLY be bought at the state liquor outlets called [VÍNÚÐIN](#). Store locations and opening hours can be found on their website.

Swimming Pools

The swimming pools in Iceland are wonderful and you can swim outdoors even during the winter. This is because the pools, like the houses, are heated with geothermal water. Do pack your swimming suits as it is wonderful to float in the warm water and see the snowflakes drift above you. In Iceland, people survive the darkness and cold of the winters by going to the pool every day. So, we highly recommend that you do the same!

There are different [geothermal swimming pools](#) (sundlaugar). The swimming pools are most often outdoors and usually have hot pots, steam-bath and sauna as well.



The closest swimming pools to the University are:

Vesturbæjarlaug at Hofsvallagata. The opening hours are Mon-Fri: 6:30 -22:00, Sat-Sun: 9:00-22:00.

Sundhöllin at Barónsstígur 45a. Sundhöllin is the oldest swimming pool in Reykjavík, originally built in the 1930s but with a recent renovation and outdoor pool addition. The opening hours are Mon-Fri 6:30-22:00 and Sat-Sun 8:00-22:00.

Laugardalslaug at Sundlaugarvegur 30. The opening hours are Mon-Fri 6:30-22:00 and Sat-Sun 8:00-22:00.

More information on swimming pools in Iceland: <https://reykjavik.is/en/swimming-pools>. It can be very fun to try out more rural swimming pools if you travel outside Reykjavik.

Also, check out the [Thermal Pool Rules](#). It is very important to shower without swim suit and properly before entering the pool.

Weather

The weather in Iceland changes a lot and is generally pretty unpredictable. You can have snow, rain, sun, storm, and fog, all in one day! Check out this [video](#) for a bit of fun.

Even though the extreme weather changes are a part of your Iceland experience, we are of course hoping that the weather will behave reasonably this semester. Remember to dress according to the weather and keep track of the weather forecast, especially in January, February and March. The Icelandic Met Office updates weather forecasts on a regular basis. You can check their [website](#) or download their app (just put “vedur” into your phone’s app store).

You might also notice that Icelanders talk a lot about the weather so that is always a go-to topic when in doubt about how to initiate a conversation! Here’s an example:

Icelander: Góðan daginn!

You: Hi, I don't speak Icelandic, I'm from [insert country]. Wow, it's really cold around here, how on earth do you stay warm here?

Icelander: [Talks to you about the weather for 5 minutes and is now your new friend]

When the weather is about to get worse, the Met Office publishes alerts on the top of their website, also to be found on: <http://en.vedur.is/alerts>. The alerts are colour coded:

Yellow will be shown on a map of Iceland indicating where severe gales, storms or floods are expected.

Orange means bad weather and tells people to be careful when going out and traveling.

Red indicates really bad weather, which will not pass you by easily! Hopefully, we will not see that during your stay.

Green means everything is fine again, and may be used after alerts have been raised to yellow, orange or red. It then means that the weather has settled.

And on to the nice thing nature can give us in this country: The Aurora Borealis or Northern Lights during the evenings and nights when it is dark and the sky is clear (and usually rather cold). On this [link](#) you can keep track of when they may be easily spotted in and around Reykjavík. We hope that most of you will see them during your stay here.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT ICELAND

Iceland is located in the North Atlantic Ocean. It is the second largest island in Europe, with an area of about 103,000 km². Its location on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge makes Iceland volcanically and geologically active and the volcanism has defined Icelandic landscapes in various ways with different types of volcanoes, glacial rivers, glaciers and sand fields. The frequent volcanic activity makes the Icelandic landscape change rapidly. The volcanic eruption in Eyjafjallajökull in 2010 made headlines when it affected air traffic in Northern Europe. The eruption took place in a remote area of Iceland and had little impact on life in Reykjavik. A new island, Surtsey, was formed south of the mainland in 1963, and a major eruption took place in 1973 when a volcano on the island Heimaey spilled lava into the town of Vestmannaeyjar. About 75% of the land is more than 200 meters high with most of the land being high plateaus and mountains. Its highest peak, Hvannadalshnúkur, rises to 2,110 m. Glaciers cover 11,200 km², including Vatnajökull the largest glacier in Europe, while suitable agricultural land only covers 1,400 km². Only the coastline is inhabited, and there are no inhabitants in the central highlands. In 2024 the population of Iceland is 393,396 with 61% of the population, or 239,733 people, living in the greater Reykjavik area.

History- The Republic of Iceland

Iceland was settled by Nordic people in the years around 874 AD and in about 930, the Icelandic settlers founded one of the world's first republican governments. The Old Commonwealth Age, described in the classic Icelandic Sagas, lasted until 1262, when Iceland lost its independence and became a Danish colony. In 1918, it regained its independence from Denmark, and in 1944 the present republic was founded. Iceland has a written constitution and a parliamentary form of government. The president is elected by direct popular vote for a term of 4 years, with no term limit. The president's role is mostly ceremonial. Most executive power rests with the Government. Alþingi is a legislative body of 63 members from 6 districts elected for a term of 4 years by popular vote. A cabinet of ministers stays in power until the next general election or a new government is formed. There are currently nine ministers and one prime minister. The ministers sit in Alþingi, but if they have not been elected, they do not have the right to vote in parliament.

According to Iceland's constitution, ratified in 1944, the government is divided into three branches, the legislative, the judicial, and the executive branches. Alþingi, where laws are made and amended, is the legislative branch. Executive branches, such as the ministries, directorates and various other government agencies, carry out laws. Judicial power lies with the Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, and the district courts.

About Reykjavik



Reykjavík is a dynamic small capital, with a large number of restaurants, cafés, pubs, bookstores and puffin-shops. Reykjavik held the prestigious title of “European City of Culture” in the year 2000; a welcome recognition of the energetic and colourful cultural life of the capital. It has the best of both worlds: the qualities of a modern, forward-looking society are complemented by a close connection to beautiful and unspoiled nature in the city's vicinity.

The population of the city is around 240,000 including its suburbs and nearby villages. Reykjavik is spread across a peninsula with a panoramic view of the mountains and the Atlantic Ocean on almost all sides. In the spring, you can sit by the harbour at almost midnight and watch the sun dip slightly below the horizon before it makes its way up again.

For practical information and events in Reykjavik, see visitreykjavik.is. Grapevine.is also offers a useful overview of news and events in Reykjavik. For those who are news thirsty, [RÚV English](http://RUV.English) offers a local news service in English by The Icelandic National Broadcasting Service.

Official Language

Icelandic is the native tongue of Iceland. It belongs, along with Norwegian and Faeroese, to the West Scandinavian branch of the North Germanic family of languages. Morphologically it has remained the most conservative of the Scandinavian languages, retaining, for example, three genders and a full system of case endings for nouns and adjectives. It is the same language that was spoken by the original Norse settlers from western Norway in the ninth and tenth centuries with, of course, the addition of modern vocabulary. Most Icelanders, particularly those of the younger generation speak good English, and visitors can easily ask for directions and assistance in English.

Research

The Icelandic system of research and development is a multilevel system with a dispersed decision-making structure. It has a number of fully-fledged research institutions, essential funds and a strong force of well-trained scientists, and covers all major fields in science and technology. Icelandic scientists face a challenging task of maintaining the quality and range of research activities. Concentration of research in key areas is important in order to optimize resources. Science and technology have been divided at an institutional level, reflecting a particular historical development and institutional division of labour.

Religion

62% of all Icelanders officially belong to the state supported [Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland](#). The National Church operates many churches in Reykjavík. However, it is estimated that only 2% of Icelanders attend church services on a regular basis.

There is a small community of Muslims in Iceland. Find information about the Muslim Association of Iceland (Félag múslima á Íslandi), the Islamic Cultural Center of Iceland (Menningarsetur múslima á Íslandi) and the Islamic Foundation of Iceland (Stofnun múslima á Íslandi) online; via google, ja.is and Facebook, or ask around.

The main [Catholic Church](#) is located near campus, information on parish life and services is found on the website.

Some other religious groups in Reykjavík are:

[The Ásatrú Fellowship](#) – Old Icelandic polytheistic paganism often referred to as Heathenry.

[Fíladelfía Pentecostal Church](#)

[The Russian Orthodox Church in Iceland](#)

[The Free Lutheran Church of Reykjavík](#)

A steadily growing number of Icelanders do not identify as religious and are not registered to any church or other religious associations. [Siðmennt/Humanists Iceland](#) is an association of ethical humanists in Iceland, offering, among other things, non-religious ceremonies for many of life's occasions.

Climate

Iceland enjoys a much milder climate than its name and location adjacent to the Arctic Circle would imply. A branch of the Gulf Stream flows along the southern and the western coast which greatly moderates the climate. However, this brings mild Atlantic air in contact with colder Arctic air resulting in a climate that is marked by frequent changes in weather and storminess. Furthermore, this leads to more rainfall in the southern and western part than in the northern part of the island. The summer tourist season is from late May to early September. During the first half of this period the sun stays above the horizon for almost 24 hours and the interplay of light and shadows on mountains, lava fields and glaciers yield an ever-changing landscape. However, even during the middle of summer the sky is frequently cloudy or overcast and the sunshine does not warm the air much. Hence, during daytime the air is usually cool (“refreshing” is the local euphemism) and cold during night times.

Food

Icelandic cuisine has a long history. Important parts of Icelandic cuisine are lamb, dairy, and fish, due to Iceland's proximity to the ocean. Popular foods in Iceland include skyr (similar to yoghurt), hangikjöt (smoked lamb), kleinur, laufabrauð and bollur (baked goods). Points of pride are the quality of the lamb meat and seafood.

Other local ingredients that form part of the Icelandic chef's store include seabirds and waterfowl (including their eggs), salmon and trout, crowberry, blueberry, rhubarb, Iceland moss, wild mushrooms, wild thyme, lovage, angelica and dried seaweed as well as a wide array of dairy products.

Animal products dominate Icelandic cuisine. Popular taste has developed, however, to become closer to the European norm, and consumption of vegetables has greatly increased in recent decades while consumption of fish has diminished. Fresh lamb meat remains very popular. In recent years, the variety of available vegan products (and restaurant meals) has increased significantly.

In the capital, Reykjavik, you can find many diverse restaurants and fast food chains that serve everything from Icelandic cuisine, to American and Italian cuisine, as well as Middle Eastern cuisine.

Water

The water from the tap in Iceland is very drinkable. The warm and hot water sometimes smells like rotten eggs which is because of the sulfur coming from the ground due to volcanic activity. This is nothing to worry about. If you want to drink hot water or have some tea, just heat up the cold water with the kettle as the water otherwise can have this unpleasant taste.

We recommend that you use a refillable bottle as the cold tap water in Iceland has very good quality and it's environmentally friendly. One trick is to always let the cold water run for some seconds before you fill your glass or bottle to get the sulfur smell out.

Energy

Situated on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, Iceland is a hot spot of volcanic and geothermal activity. Thirty post-glacial volcanoes have erupted in the past two centuries, and natural hot water supplies much of the population with cheap, pollution-free heating. Geothermal heating of houses began around 1930, and today all of Reykjavik is heated by the Reykjavik Energy district heating system. Throughout Iceland, about 90% of the population now enjoy geothermal heating (not all parts of the country have utilizable hot water resources). The hot water that comes running from the faucets in houses in Reykjavik comes from Nesjavallavirkjun and can be up to 80°C so people should be very careful when using it. Rivers are, moreover, harnessed to provide inexpensive hydroelectric power. The electrical current is 220 volts, 50 Hz. Electricity in Iceland uses the Europlug/Schuko-Plug (CEE types), which has two round prongs, or three for earth. **If you need a plug adaptor we recommend that you purchase one before leaving home or at an airport along the way, so as to be able to recharge your devices when you get to your campus rooms.**



Economy

The economy is heavily dependent upon fisheries, which are the nation's major resource, and almost 60% of all exports are made up of seafood products. Yet only a small proportion of the workforce is active in this sector (5% in fishing, 6.2% in fish processing), and over 50% of the workforce is employed in services, public and other. Tourism has become another important part of the economy.

Iceland is a member of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the European Economic Area (EEA).

Time

Local time in Iceland is Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) all year round. This is one hour later than Central European Time during winter, but two hours later in the summertime.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DEPARTURE

Since we talk about arriving in Iceland and living in Iceland, we should also talk about your departure.

We recommend that you close your bank accounts a few days before you leave Iceland, transferring any surplus funds to your bank accounts at home, but remember to keep some cash for your final days, exchanging it to US dollars or Euros before departure. Please try not to leave too much food behind, and in case you do, please give whatever you leave to your kitchen mates or other students, to limit food waste. If you wish to leave clothes behind, we request that you deliver them to a Red Cross container before you leave, so start packing early, to know what you will end up needing to leave behind in Iceland. You may not leave belongings behind in your rooms or in the kitchen cabinets that are marked for those rooms.

You will all depart Iceland/student housing shortly after your graduation. Please leave your rooms clean; leave the duvets and linen on your bed and the routers on your desk. Further information about your departure will be provided closer to the departure date.

MORE USEFUL LINKS

[Practical information](#) by the University of Iceland about the University, accommodations, and living in Iceland.

University of Iceland [Guide for International Students \(a few years old but mostly relevant\)](#)

[W.O.M.E.N. Iceland](#)

[Online language course](#) for Icelandic basics

[Multicultural Information Center](#)

[What's on](#) in Reykjavík

Icelandic [Red Cross](#)

Annex: Rules of Procedure on the Response to Gender-related and Sexual Harassment and Other Sexual Violence of the University of Iceland

Rules of Procedure on the Response to Gender-related and Sexual Harassment and Other Sexual Violence.

Revised rules of procedure approved by the University Council 1 March 2018

Article 1 Objective

Gender-related and sexual harassment and gender-related and sexual violence (hereafter referred to as offences), committed by a staff member or student at the University of Iceland (UI), are strictly forbidden. Such behaviour is neither tolerated in relations between staff and students, relations between staff members, relations between students nor relations between UI staff members or students with individuals who are not considered staff members or students at UI, provided that the relations take place in connection with UI operations.

The objective of these rules of procedure is to ensure that resources are in place should a party, as defined in paragraph 1, consider herself/himself as a victim of such an offence.

Article 2 Concepts

The term **gender-based harassment** refers to behaviour that is related to the gender of the person subjected to it, is unwelcome, and has the purpose or effect of violating the target's dignity and creating circumstances that are threatening, hostile, humiliating, or offensive. The harassment may be physical, verbal or symbolic. A single incident may be deemed gender-related harassment.

The term **sexual harassment** refers to any kind of unwelcome sexual behaviour which has the purpose or effect of violating the target's dignity, particularly if such behaviour leads to threatening, hostile, humiliating, or offensive circumstances. Such behaviour may be verbal, symbolic and/or physical. A single incident may be deemed sexual harassment.

The term **gender-based violence** refers to violence committed on the basis of a person's gender which leads to or may lead to physical, sexual, or psychological harm or distress for the victim, as well as a threat thereof, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, both in private life and public field.

The term **sexual violence** refers to an offence against an individual's sexual freedom which is declared punishable in Chapter XXII of the General Penal Code.

The term **staff members** refers to any and all individuals employed at the University of Iceland, whether they are permanent or temporary employees, sessional teachers, or work for the University as contractors or subcontractors.

The term **parties to the case** refers to those said to have committed an offence and those said to have been the target(s) of the offence.

Article 3 Professional Council

The University Council appoints a [Professional Council](#) which role is to process cases relating to the aforementioned offences committed by staff members or students of the University of

Iceland. The Professional Council shall be appointed for a three-year term. The appointed chair shall be an individual who has professional knowledge and experience in handling cases of this nature and is not an employee at UI. In addition to the chair, one member nominated by the UI Division of Human Resources and one member nominated by the UI Student Counselling and Career Centre shall be appointed. The University Council shall also appoint three members as alternates, in accordance with the same rules.

Care must be taken to ensure that nominations comply with the provisions of Article 15 of the Act on Equal Status and Equal Rights of Women and Men, no. 10/2008.

The role of the Professional Council is to receive and investigate complaints and reports regarding offences committed by staff members or students of UI, provide supervisors of the academic or work units of the parties to the case with an observation on these complaints and notices, and propose reforms as applicable. The Professional Council shall furthermore advise UI authorities on preventative measures that might be taken against such offences. The Professional Council shall take into account the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, no. 37/1993, particularly concerning the right to be heard, duty to investigate, equal treatment of parties, and prompt handling, as applicable. The Professional Council shall establish further guidelines for their work practices.

A representative from the Division of Human Resources and the UI equality officer work with the Professional Council.

Article 4 Complaints

Anyone wishing to submit a complaint regarding an offence committed against them, either currently ongoing or in the past, by a staff member or student at the University of Iceland or anyone wishing to report an offence which they have reasoned suspicion or knowledge shall contact one of the [three members of the Professional Council](#) or the [UI equality officer](#).

UI staff members may also contact their immediate superior. If this individual is the one deemed to have committed the offence, the staff member may turn to the superior's superior. Students may also contact their faculty dean or, depending on circumstances, their school dean.

Anyone receiving such a complaint or report shall immediately refer the matter to the Professional Council for processing.

Article 5 Processing of cases and the observation of the Professional Council

Upon receiving a complaint or report of an offence, the Professional Council shall summon the accused to a meeting to examine his/her position regarding the complaint or report. If a report is submitted by an individual other than the assumed victim of the offence, the Council summons the assumed victim to a meeting to examine their position on the report. Following the interviews with the parties to the case, the Council determines whether the case shall be formally processed. The Professional Council shall have unrestricted access to pertinent files in the University and faculty archives.

If the Professional Council decides to formally process a case, it shall notify the supervisors of the academic or work units of the parties to the case, as needed. The supervisors shall, having consulted with the Professional Council, take any necessary measures concerning the academic

or work arrangements of the parties to the case. Efforts shall be made to reach an agreement regarding work arrangements whilst the matter is under review. The complainant or assumed victim of the offence may not be transferred to another position because of gender-based or sexual harassment or violence without having requested this her/himself.

The Professional Council shall thoroughly investigate the matter, e.g. by interviewing the parties involved and, as appropriate, their co-workers or other individuals who may be able to shed light on the case. The Professional Council shall offer the assumed victim of the offence professional assistance from a psychologist, social worker or other therapist with specialist knowledge of the offences involved. Should the person in question wish to report the matter to the police, the Professional Council shall assist in this as far as possible.

After the investigation is concluded, the Professional Council shall issue an observation outlining its conclusions to the parties involved, as well as to the supervisors of their academic or work units. Should the Professional Council deem that an offence has been committed, it shall submit a proposal to the supervisor of the relevant academic or work unit concerning the appropriate response. The supervisor shall then determine the most appropriate course of action, in consultation with the Division of Human Resources or the Student Counselling and Career Centre. The final decision in such cases shall be taken in accordance with the law and UI regulations.

Article 6 Confidentiality

Unless the law dictates otherwise, the Professional Council and others involved are required to treat individual cases as confidential.

Article 7 Statistical information

The Professional Council shall record and maintain statistical information on cases it receives. This information shall be published annually.

Article 8 Entry into force

These Rules of procedure, established based on Article 2 of the Regulation for the University of Iceland, no. 569/2009, and in accordance with the Act on Equal Status and Equal Rights of Women and Men, no. 10/2008, and the Regulation on bullying, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment and violence at the workplace, no. 1009/2015, shall enter into force upon being approved by the University Council.