Framework provisions

University pedagogy program at Aalborg University

§ 1. Objectives of the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors

The university pedagogy program is a comprehensive, research-based pedagogical competence development course that provides course participants with the pedagogical and didactic foundation for a permanent career at Aalborg University (or another higher education institution). Completion of the university pedagogy program or an equivalent course is a requirement for working as an associate professor at Aalborg University, cf. Aalborg University's policy for teaching staff's pedagogical competence development.

The university pedagogy program is offered with reference to the Circular on proceedings concerning certain employment conditions for academic staff at universities, which states that employment as an associate professor requires the completion of a course in university pedagogy https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/retsinfo/2021/9886 (in Danish).

The university pedagogy program at Aalborg University is a central element of the university's quality assurance system for its study programs. Problem-based learning (PBL) is the focal point of the university's pedagogical programme. The course's overall objective is to develop and ensure each participant's pedagogical competence to undertake class teaching, supervision, planning of teaching, and examinations in the university's study programs.

The university pedagogy program focuses on various forms of teaching over the range of educational programs offered by the university, which are aimed at bachelor's and master's degree students and target groups with business experience within the framework of the university's offerings of master's degree programs and other continuing and further education.

(2)
The university pedagogy program is organized as a problem-based course. The course is centered around the participants' teaching experiences and on learning through dialogue and experimentation. The focal point of the course for each participant is the study group meetings, which are combined with targeted seminars and varied pedagogical subjects and feedback on teaching and supervision from peers, a department, and a pedagogical supervisor. Through participation in these activities, the participant works towards achieving the learning goals set for the course.

(3)

The programme aims to support participants in developing teaching and pedagogical competences that are aligned with AAU teaching and learning strategies and becoming devoted to the scholarship of teaching and learning through reflective practices and by experiencing PBL from a student perspective. The overall **learning outcomes** for the university pedagogy program are that the participants acquire the knowledge, skills, and competences to do the following:

1) Connect diverse pedagogical theories and methods with Aalborg University's principles of problem-based learning in support of student learning.
2) Design and plan relevant teaching activities with the support of pedagogical theories and digital principles within the AAU context.
3) Conduct the planned teaching activities in relevant contexts.
4) Develop diverse assessment strategies aligned with the PBL principles at AAU that provide feedback about learning to students and teachers.
5) Reflect on own teaching practice to self-evaluate and improve continuously.
6) Engage in the scholarship of teaching and lifelong learning.

(4)

The university pedagogy program takes into account the fact that Aalborg University is an international workplace with Danish and English as its two official working languages. All compulsory course modules and seminars are offered exclusively in English.

§ 2. Duration, structure, content, etc.

The university pedagogy program is 10 ECTS points.

The university pedagogy program is organized to run for one year. Participants who are not able to finish within the time limit must send a request for a respite to Learning Lab. The course must be completed in a maximum of two years.

If a participant does not complete the university pedagogy program within two years, the participant must apply for the opportunity to be admitted to a new course at the Learning Lab's secretariat. Please refer to §10 regarding special conditions and exemptions.

(2)
The university pedagogy program includes the following:

- An opening day.
- Seven compulsory group meetings.
- Pedagogical/didactic supervision and teaching observation by a department supervisor and a pedagogical supervisor.
- AAU Learning Day
- A residential course.
- An online course on the use of IT and Media for teaching and learning.
- English language certification.

- Two seminars on the Scholarship pf teaching and Learning
- An activity log
- A teaching and learning statement.
- A project report based on the principles of PBL.

(3)
The program consists of two phases

Phase 1: Design new teaching practice (Spring semester)
During Phase 1, participants identify one or multiple issues in their own teaching practices which can be improved to support the AAU PBL principles and T&L strategies. Working within their situated contexts (course, programme, or department), participants conduct a thorough analysis of such practices and issue(s) before proposing new solutions in the form of an action plan with a new teaching design (e.g. PBL supervision practice, a revised course/elements of a course, or a newly designed course/elements of a course). The action plan must be handed in to the supervisors by the end of the spring semester (specific dates are in Moodle) in order to be able to continue to phase 2.

Phase 2: Implement and evaluate the new practice (Autumn semester)
During Phase 2, participants implement their proposed action plan. Participants document evidence of the process and outcome of the implementation of the new practice. Such evidence may include course materials, student work samples, student feedback, and participants' reflections. Phase two terminates when participants submit a project report to Learning lab.

(4)
At the start of the course, the participants are divided into peer study groups. The aim of the study groups is for the participants to have the opportunity to create a forum in which they can discuss issues and reflections related to participation in the university pedagogy program, the reading of relevant theories, and/or in relation to their own teaching practice.

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5)
At the beginning of the course, each participant is assigned two supervisors: a department supervisor and a pedagogical supervisor. The supervisors must each offer pedagogical and didactic supervision and sparring in relation to the teaching activities of the participant.

(6)
The university pedagogical programs' compulsory course modules are the following:

1. Opening day.
2. Residential course (two-day retreat).
3. The Use of IT and Media for Teaching and Learning (online course).
4. AAU Learning Day.
5. Two joint seminars focusing on developing the projects of each participant.

(7)

Participants must complete an English language certification as part of the university pedagogy program. This involves the participant participating in a language screening at the beginning of the course in which the individual's English language competence level is assessed. Based on this assessment, the participant is either 1) referred directly to participate in the language certification test, 2) referred to participate in a supplementary English skills development course or 3) asked to participate in a general upgrading of their basic language skills.

(8)

As part of the university pedagogical programme, a project report is produced. The objectives of this are the following:

- Document that the participant can work with a self-chosen pedagogical issue and address this problem based on theories on teaching, pedagogy, and didactics.
- Contribute to the participant's reflection on their own pedagogical practice and development during the university pedagogical programme.
- Define and qualify the participant's future pedagogical development goals and strategies.

§ 3. Peer study groups
At the start of the course, the participants are divided into peer study groups. Each group is assigned a pedagogical supervisor.

The aim of the study group is for the participants to have the opportunity to participate in a forum in which they can discuss issues and reflections related to participation in the university pedagogical programme, the reading of relevant theories, and/or their own teaching practice.

Participants meet in their groups seven times during the course. Group meetings are approximately three hours long. The pedagogical supervisor attends each meeting. The department supervisor must attend at least one group meeting per semester.

The pedagogical supervisor facilitates all group meetings. Each study group meeting is centered around a specific topic related to university teaching. Participants must prepare by reading assigned texts and reflect upon the probing questions.

The participants in the study group must make arrangements to observe and provide feedback on each other's teaching within the group. Every participant must be observed and receive feedback from peers once per semester.

§ 4. Supervision
During the programme, participants work with two supervisors:

- The department supervisor
- The pedagogical supervisor

<u>Department supervisor</u>:

The primary task of the department supervisor is to be a local ambassador who introduces the participant to the tasks and obligations of a teacher in their specific department. The most important contribution is teaching observations and feedback to the participants. The department supervisor must conduct 6 teaching observations during the course. Two of these can be converted to other activities e.g. participant observes supervisor teaching, co-teaching between participant and supervisor, joint observation of another teacher, project report supervision and more.

<u>Pedagogical supervisor</u>:

The pedagogical supervisor facilitates all peer group meetings. The pedagogical supervisor provides feedback on the project proposal of the participants. The pedagogical supervisor conducts one teaching observation of each participant per semester.

§ 5. Compulsory course modules

The university pedagogy program includes six compulsory course modules:

Opening day

The course module introduces participants to the university pedagogy programme and the various activities participants are to engage in during their year at the UPP. Participants also have the opportunity to meet in their study group with their supervisor to make arrangements for the first meetings in the group. Finally, the module provides participants with a research-based, theoretical frame of reflection for PBL-oriented pedagogy that focuses on the links between teaching, supervision, and the students' learning processes in a PBL environment.

Residential course

The course is a mixture of short presentations, group work, exercises, walks-and-talks, and other student-engaging activities. The subjects taught cover general university pedagogy topics. This course is also an opportunity for participants to meet with participants from other departments and faculties, thus broadening their network at AAU.

The Use of IT and Media for Teaching and Learning

The course module is focused on the use of IT and media in the pedagogical planning and implementation of teaching, including how IT, media, and labs can be used to help engage students. The course module includes several types of technology use and discusses how these are best utilized in a PBL context. The teaching integrates the use of specific technologies and media and thus is organized as blended learning, with video sessions, online courses, etc., included.

AAU Learning Day

The AAU Learning Day conference is an annual conference at Aalborg University that highlights teaching and learning. The Learning Day is for all staff and presents participants with insights from keynote speakers and fellow teachers and researchers from Aalborg University who share their experiences and thoughts on teaching and learning with their colleagues.

Autumn seminars focusing on developing the projects of each participant

At the seminars, participants have the opportunity to meet with participants from other study groups to present and receive feedback on the project plans. Thus, the seminars are a place for dialogue and reciprocal exchange of ideas and experiences related to university pedagogy.

§ 6. English language certification

English language screening and certification ensures that participants can demonstrate English language certification at the C1 level or above, based on the Council of Europe's CEFR scale (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

First, participants must complete an English language screening. Following a successful screening and/or completion of recommended courses within the English language certification programme, all eligible participants then take an English language certification exam to ensure a C1 English language proficiency in teaching. The procedures for the English language screening and the English language certification exam are the same, except that both an examiner and a co-examiner are present for the certification exam.

The screening and certification exam consists of the following. First, each participant gives a short teaching or research presentation that a non-specialist academic audience can easily understand. Second, each participant reads aloud an excerpt from a provided reading. Third, each participant engages in a discussion of the reading topic facilitated by the examiner and/or censor.

The language examiner (and censor in the case of the certification exam) determines whether the participant has demonstrated C1-level English proficiency or whether further English language development is needed. In the assessment, emphasis is placed on language skills and communicational, educational, and didactic skills in connection with teaching in English to primarily non-native-speaking students.

There are three possible outcomes of the screening: participants may be advised to proceed directly to the language certification (and should sign themselves up for the exam when it is next offered), participants may be directed to take one or more courses offered within the English language certification program (aimed to enhance participants' English language development before proceeding to the exam), or participants may be directed to seek additional English language tuition before returning to do the screening again at a later stage.

If a participant's assessment reveals a level of English language competency far below the C1 level or the participant fails two subsequent English language certification exams, the participant's department must cover the expenses for further supporting the participant's English language development.

§ 7. Project report
The project report is based on a self-chosen pedagogical/didactic issue that is relevant to the participant's own teaching. The issue is discussed with the two supervisors and forms the starting point for the research question, which is the basis for the participant's work with the chosen problem. With the report, the participant must do the following:
   A. Document achievement of the learning goals set in the framework provisions.
   B. Demonstrate the ability of the participant to systematically and reflectively address a pedagogical and didactic issue based on relevant theories and methods.
   C. Show perspectives for future pedagogical development.

The project report can be written individually or in groups. The report must be 5–10 pages long for an individual project, 10–20 pages for pairs, 15–30 pages for groups of three, and so on, with 2400 characters per page (excluding appendices). The project report and associated appendices can be written in Danish, English, Swedish, or Norwegian.

As appendices to the project report, participants must include an 'Activity log' and a 'Teaching and

learning statement'. Templates are provided for each appendix.

The project report must be sent to the Learning Lab at the end of the university pedagogy program. The report is assessed as pass or fail by both supervisors. In the event of a disagreement, the pedagogical supervisor is to be considered an external examiner and therefore has the decisive vote. The project report must achieve the assessment 'pass' before the overall course can be completed.

The project report is included as background material for the evaluation statement written by the supervisors.

§ 8. Completion of the University Pedagogy Program

Passing the university pedagogy program requires the following:

1. Active participation in at least 80% of all activities (Documented through the activity log)
2. Completion of English language certification at the C1 level on the CEFR scale.
3. Submission of a written project report that achieves the grade 'pass'.

(2)

Based on the criteria mentioned above, the participant's two supervisors write a short evaluation statement in which they assess the work and development of the participant during the course in relation to the learning goals mentioned above.

In addition, a certificate of completion of the university pedagogy program is issued. The certificate is issued in English.

§ 10. Special conditions and exemptions

In the event of a participant starting but not completing the university pedagogy program, previously completed compulsory course modules can be transferred to a new course.

(2)

Cf. § 2, the university pedagogy program must be completed within two years of the start of the course. Any exemption regarding the two-year rule (e.g. due to long-term illness, maternity/paternity leave, or other exceptional circumstances) must be formally granted by Learning Lab and the participant's department and faculty *before* the two-year deadline expires.

§ 11. Entry into force

These framework provisions and competence goals come into effect for participants starting the university pedagogy program in January 2025.