

Framework provisions

University pedagogy for assistant professors at Aalborg University

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

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

The course in university pedagogy for assistant professors is offered with reference to the Circular on proceedings concerning certain employment conditions for academic staff at universities, in which it is stated that employment as an associate professor requires the completion of a course in university pedagogy <https://www.retsinformation.dk/forms/R0710.aspx?id=174476> (in Danish).

The course in university pedagogy for assistant professors at Aalborg University is a central element in the university's quality assurance system for its study programmes. Problem-based learning (PBL) is the focal point of the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors, and the course's overall objective is to develop and ensure the assistant professor's pedagogical competences for undertaking class teaching, supervision, the planning of teaching, and examinations on the university's study programmes.

The course in university pedagogy for assistant professors focuses on different forms of teaching on the overall range of educational programmes offered by the university, which are aimed at bachelor and master students as well as target groups with business experience within the framework of the university's offerings of master programmes and other continuing and further education.

(2)

The course in university pedagogy for assistant professors is organised as a combination of course modules and feedback on teaching and supervision from the participant's study group as well as from an expert supervisor and a pedagogical supervisor. Through participation in these activities, the assistant professor works towards achieving the set learning goals for the course.

(3)

The overall **learning goals** for the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors are that the assistant professor must acquire knowledge, skills, and competences to a sufficient level to:

- apply Aalborg University's principles of problem-based learning in all of their activities as a teacher at Aalborg University.
- use relevant pedagogical and didactic methods and theories in the development, planning, and implementation of both individual courses and long-term course and supervision activities in consideration of the target group for the individual activity.
- use relevant IT tools for disseminating and organising teaching.
- carry out teaching for different class sizes and target groups.
- supervise and lead learning processes based on problem-based learning and problem-based project work.
- hold examinations in accordance with the curricula's learning goals as well as the other applicable rules for examinations and grading.
- participate actively in continuous development, evaluation, and quality assurance of the programmes offered by the university.
- reflect on their own teaching and supervision with regard to continuously being able to evaluate and develop these activities.
- be able to identify and formulate their own needs for further pedagogical training as well as, and in continuation hereof, be able to focus on the development of their own teaching skills.
- be able to acquire research-based knowledge on pedagogy, didactics, and teaching on higher education programmes and communicate this knowledge to a wide audience.

The objective of each of the course modules on the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors is to support the development of one or more of the above competences.

(4)

The course in university pedagogy for assistant professors takes account of the fact that Aalborg University is an international workplace with Danish and English as the two official working languages. All compulsory course modules and elective course modules are offered exclusively in English.

§ 2. Duration, structure, content, etc.

The course in university pedagogy for assistant professors is 10 ECTS points.

The course in university pedagogy for assistant professors is organised to run over one year. The course must be completed in a maximum of two years.

In the event that an assistant professor does not complete the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors within two years, then he or she must apply for the opportunity to be admitted to a new course at the Learning Lab's secretariat (with their head of department's approval attached). Please refer to § 8 regarding special conditions and exemptions.

(2)

The course in university pedagogy for assistant professors includes:

- Five compulsory course modules
- At least three elective course modules
- Pedagogical/didactic supervision and teaching observation by an expert supervisor as well as a pedagogical supervisor
- English language certification
- Collegial sparring in small study groups, including observation of each other's teaching
- A project report produced as a problem-based project

(3)

The course in university pedagogy for assistant professors' five compulsory course modules are:

1. Teaching at a PBL University
2. Planning and Implementation of Group Instruction
3. The Use of IT and Media for Teaching and Learning
4. The PBL Group – Collaboration, Process, and Supervision
5. Planning, Development, and Quality Assurance of Study Programmes

The content and form of the compulsory course modules are described in more detail in § 3.

(4)

The course in university pedagogy for assistant professors includes participation in a minimum of three elective course modules. Elective course modules are chosen freely by the individual assistant professor from the elective course catalogue.

The approval of a course module as a part of the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors requires the assistant professor's active participation in the chosen course module, cf. the description of this.

The regulations for elective course modules on the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors are described in more detail in § 4.

(5)

At the beginning of the course, each assistant professor is assigned two supervisors: a pedagogical supervisor as well as an expert supervisor from their own department/academic environment.

During their collaboration with the assistant professor, the two supervisors must hold *a minimum* of six (expert supervisor) and four (pedagogical supervisor) meetings with the assistant professor. The focus of the meetings will typically be an observation, where the supervisors observe the assistant professor while he/she carries out class teaching, supervision meetings, or other relevant teaching activities. The supervisors must each offer pedagogical and didactic supervision and sparring in relation to the observed activities.

It is the assistant professor's duty to take the initiative to start the cooperation with the supervisors at the beginning of the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors. This means that before the end of February, the assistant professor must contact his/her supervisors and make an appointment for the first meeting. As a point of departure, it is preferable that both supervisors together participate in this first meeting. If the assistant professor does not take the initiative to this contact within the time frame mentioned, you cannot be sure that the supervisors can find time for the minimum number of compulsory meetings. If the assistant professor has problems with contacting a supervisor, it is important that the assistant professor contacts Learning Lab, learninglab@learning.aau.dk.

(6)

As part of the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors, there is an obligatory English language certification. This involves the assistant professor participating at the beginning of the course in a language screening, where the individual's English language competence level is assessed and the assistant professor is either 1) referred directly to participate in the language certification test or 2) referred to participate in a supplementary English skills development course, which is not a part of the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors and is run by AAU Language and Communication Services (LACS).

The content and form of the English language certification are described in more detail in § 5.

(7)

At the start of the course, the participants are divided into study groups. The aim of the study groups is for the assistant professors to have the opportunity to create a forum in which they can discuss issues and reflections related to participation in the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors, the reading of relevant theories, and/or in relation to their own teaching practice. Furthermore, the goal is for the assistant professors to take measures that make it possible for them to observe and provide feedback on each other's teaching within the group. Everyone must have the opportunity to both observe a colleague's teaching and provide feedback on it, as well as to receive feedback from colleagues on their own teaching.

(8)

As part of the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors, a project report is produced. The objectives of this are:

- to document that the assistant professor can work with a self-chosen pedagogical/didactic issue and address this problem based on theories on teaching, pedagogy, and didactics.
- to contribute to the assistant professor's reflection on their own pedagogical practice and development during the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors.
- to define and qualify the assistant professor's future pedagogical development goals and strategies.

The content and form of the project report are described in more detail in § 6.

§ 3. Compulsory course modules

The course in university pedagogy for assistant professors includes five compulsory course modules:

Course module 1: Teaching at a PBL University

The course module gives a research-based, theoretical frame of reflection for PBL-oriented pedagogy and focuses on the link between teaching, supervision, and the students' learning processes in a PBL environment. The course module takes the participants' understanding of PBL as its starting point, which is expanded and elaborated on through theoretical inputs. In this way, PBL is characterised as an experience-based, but also research-based, theoretically supported landscape, and with this as a starting point the individual teacher can position their own understanding, practice, and development in relation to PBL.

Course module 2: Planning and Implementation of Group Instruction

The course module is focused on the planning and implementation of teaching for groups of very different sizes and types – from auditorium lectures with several hundred participants to seminars and workshops for small groups; from classroom teaching of students in the same year group and the same study programme to teaching combined groups of different types of student; from face-to-face teaching to different types of mediated teaching. The teaching is built on research-based knowledge and literature on teaching and the planning of teaching.

In all cases, the role of the teacher and the possibilities for supporting the students' learning will be central focal points in the course module.

Course module 3: 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 included to help to engage the students.

The course module includes several types of technology use, including the use of videoconferencing as well as IT platforms currently used by AAU and how these are best utilised in a PBL context. In the course module, participants are also introduced to the use of commonly used file-sharing systems and communication tools. The teaching will integrate the use of specific technologies and media and will thus be organised as blended learning, where video sessions, online courses, etc. can also be included.

Course module 4: The PBL Group – Collaboration, Process, and Supervision

The course module focuses on the group as a working community and the supervisor's role in supporting the different phases in a project or case. There is a focus on the communicative aspects of supervision and how the students can be supported in their project management, collaboration, and reflection on their own learning. Different theoretical perspectives regarding types of group and types of supervision are related to specific experiences from the participants' supervision practice. On this basis, the participants are challenged to formulate their own guidelines for 'good supervision practice' in a PBL environment. In relation to this, collaborative difficulties in the group and coaching are included as a specific theme in the course module.

Course module 5: Planning, Development, and Quality Assurance of Study Programmes

The first part of the course module is about the planning and development of the study programmes in a pedagogical perspective. Here, particular weight will be placed on the study regulations as a framework for teaching and learning. There will also be a focus on how 'good learning goals' are defined, as well as how teaching and project supervision can be organised so that it gives the students best conditions, from a pedagogical and didactic perspective, to meet the stated learning goals.

The second part of the course module encompasses themes related to formalities associated with the study programmes. There will partly be a focus on feedback, grading, and assessment as themes, including a review of different rules, laws, and procedures, as well as examiners' and co-examiners' different roles in relation to examination and assessment. In addition, a theme will be AAU's quality assurance system and procedures for, for instance, the evaluation of teaching.

§ 4. Elective course modules

In addition to the five compulsory course modules and English language certification, the assistant professor must complete (at least) three elective course modules, which can be chosen from the current elective course module catalogue.

The range of elective course modules offered varies from year to year, since new elective course modules will be developed and others will stop. This is partly due to structural, political, and/or target group development trends and challenges and partly based on specific wishes and declarations from the education council, student council, heads of departments, and study boards at AAU. However, elective courses within the areas of PBL and digitally supported learning processes will always be offered.

(2)

It is possible to replace one of the elective course modules with participation in a pedagogically relevant conference. The participation in a relevant conference can only be included in the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors if the activity is completed after the start and before the end of the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors. The application to replace an elective course module with another activity should be sent to the Learning Lab's secretariat.

§ 5. English language certification

English language screening and certification takes place as an integrated activity in the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors and includes a certification at C1 level on the Council of Europe's CEFR scale (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

At the beginning of the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors, an English language screening will take place. Here, the participants have to present a short teaching programme within their own research field as well as read and discuss an excerpt from an unknown article, after which the language consultant assesses whether they live up to the C1 level or whether they need further English courses. Assistant professors who are referred directly to the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors' English language certification subsequently sign themselves up for the language certification, which takes place at different times during the year. The assistant professors who are recommended to take further English courses are offered a special skills development course before the language certification takes place. In general, the procedure for the language certification is the same as for the language screening; however, both the instructor and a co-examiner are present for the certification. In the assessment, emphasis is placed on language skills as well as communicational, educational, and didactic skills in connection with teaching in English. Assistant professors who do not pass the certification test the first time are offered further skills development as well as another certification attempt. If there is subsequently the need for further upgrading of skills as well as a certification attempt, the assistant professor's department must cover the expenses.

For a detailed description of the English language certification (screening, potential skills development course, and certification), please see the description provided by AAU Language and Communication Services (LACS), which is available on Moodle.

§ 6. Project report

At the same time as participating in the other activities, the assistant professor works on a project report. The report is based on a self-chosen pedagogical/didactic issue that is relevant for 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 assistant professor's work with the chosen problem. With the report, the assistant professor must:

- A. document achievement of the learning goals set in the framework provisions.
- B. show that he/she can systematically and reflectively address a pedagogical and didactic issue based on relevant theories and methods.
- C. show perspectives for future pedagogical development.

An activity log describing and documenting the assistant professor's activities during the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors – including collegial sparring as well as academic and pedagogical supervision – must be attached as an appendix to the project report.

The project report must be a minimum of 5 pages and a maximum of 10 pages of 2400 characters per page (excluding appendices). The project report and associated appendices can be written in Danish, English, Swedish, or Norwegian.

The project report must be sent to Learning Lab at the end of the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors. The report is assessed as pass or fail by both the supervisors appointed by Learning Lab. For the assessment 'fail', the report is also assessed by a co-examiner appointed by Learning Lab, after which the assistant professor receives feedback. The project report must achieve the assessment 'pass' before the overall course can be completed. If more than two assessment attempts are needed, the assistant professor's department is responsible for the expenses for this assessment work.

Furthermore, the project report is included as background material for the evaluation statement, which the assistant professor's two supervisors produce on the individual assistant professor based on their supervision collaboration.

§ 7. Completion of the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors

Passing the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors requires:

1. active participation in the described compulsory course modules as well as active participation in at least three elective course modules chosen by the participant. Here, 'active participation' is understood as participating in the supervision, the courses, and the workshop activities and working with the subject material, cf. the applicable framework provisions for the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors.

2. the completion of teaching observation as well as pedagogical and expert supervision (documented in the assistant professor's activity log, which is attached to the final project report when the required supervision meetings (six with the expert supervisor and four with the pedagogical supervisor) have taken place).
3. English language certification at C1 level on the CEFR scale.
4. Completed sparring with colleagues via study groups.
5. Submission of a written project report that documents the goals outlined in § 6 and achieves the grade 'pass'.

(2)

On the basis of the above-mentioned criteria, the assistant professor's two supervisors write a short supervisor assessment in which they assess the assistant professor's work and development during the course in relation to the above-mentioned learning goals. The supervisor assessment, which has to be made jointly by the two supervisors, is written in English and should be maximum half a page.

In addition to the assistant professor receiving the above-mentioned supervisor assessment, a certificate is issued for completion of the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors. The certificate of completion for the course is issued in English.

§ 8. Special conditions and exemptions

In the event of an assistant professor starting but not completing the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors described here, previously completed compulsory course modules can be transferred to a new course. A compulsory course module is considered completed if it is registered by the secretariat for the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors that the assistant professor has participated actively in the course module.

(2)

Cf. § 2, the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors must be completed at the latest two years after 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 the participant's department and faculty *before* the two-year deadline expires.

§ 9. Entry into force

These framework provisions and competence goals come into effect for assistant professors starting the course in university pedagogy for assistant professors in January 2020.

§ 10. Appendix to the framework provisions

As a supplement to the framework provisions, there is an appendix "Guidelines for the Project Report" that clarifies the expectations regarding the form and content of the project report.