

## Principles for including external experts in degree programme evaluations at Arts

### Objective

Arts wishes to develop and offer degree programmes of high academic quality which are relevant to society. In addition to the involvement of employers and the chair of the body of external co-examiners in the ongoing development, this is achieved through the systematic involvement of employers, chairs of the body of external co-examiners and appointed external experts in the faculty's degree programme evaluations.

These programme evaluations are conducted at least once every five years, and the results being used in the further development of the study programmes, including e.g., development of objectives, content and organisation.

The external experts must contribute to the further development of these degree programmes by challenging and assisting with external perspectives on the degree programmes. The choice of external experts will ensure that the degree programmes benefit from the adoption of a societal perspective as well as an academic perspective. The experts' task is thus to adopt critical approaches to the degree programme(s) and to challenge both the management and the staff.

### Including external experts

One of the external experts must be an academic expert at the highest international level with both research and educational qualifications, including, with advantage, didactic insight. The other expert must represent employers and contribute by adopting a societal perspective.

The external experts must also have relevant job responsibilities outside Aarhus University. External experts may not have any personal interest in promoting or undermining specific aspects of a degree programme's quality assurance efforts or the ongoing development of its curriculum. The expert representing the employers must hold a position which could as a minimum potentially lead to the employment of graduates or be highly profiled within the entrepreneurial area.

Here are some examples of external experts:

- Researchers from other universities and colleges
- Consultants from the ministry
- Co-examiners from the relevant body of external co-examiners
- Professional representatives who work within the most important subject area of the degree programme in question

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- Labour market analysts, development and evaluation staff within the education and research sector, or experts in organisational development and organisational learning

Regardless of their background and specialist knowledge, all external experts must:

- Be provided with prior knowledge of the purpose and procedure of degree programme evaluations.
- Contribute to an overall evaluation of degree programme quality within the framework of the four sub-policies of Aarhus University's quality policy.
- Be included when selecting issues of relevance in connection with evaluations.
- Be given the opportunity to provide feedback on the degree programme evaluation process – including strengths, weaknesses, and any future development potentials.

Focus points in connection with recommendations of external experts:

The external experts who are recommended to participate in the evaluation of entire degree programmes should not:

- Be graduates (within the past ten years) of the degree programme which is to be evaluated.
- Have been employed at the faculty within the past ten years.
- Have a PhD in the degree programme which is to be evaluated.
- Have participated as an external expert in previous evaluations of the same degree programme(s).

Before participating in a degree programme evaluation, a standard letter will be sent to the external experts explaining the purpose of degree programme evaluations and the task that they are to perform. This letter will also state that the experts are expected to hold an introductory meeting with students and teachers.

### **Including selected employer(s) and chairs of external co-examiners**

Prior to the evaluation meeting, the degree programme evaluation report is distributed for written comments by selected members of the employer panel and the chair of external co-examiners for the degree programme concerned. The chair of the external co-examiners will be asked to focus specifically on academic quality and cohesion; while the employers will be asked to focus specifically on our degree programmes in terms of their connection with and relevance for the labour market. The comments are enclosed as appendices for the evaluation meeting and are discussed at the meeting.

### **Explanatory documents**

The faculty's principles for including external experts in degree programme evaluations are consistent with Aarhus University's overall guidelines in this area, which are

described in the document *Gældende rammer og retningslinjer for valg af eksterne eksperter* (in Danish only).

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The process governing the recommendation and appointment of external experts is described in the document *Description of the degree programme evaluation process at Arts*

Log for this document		
Description of change	Approved by and date	Effective as of date
Update of memo after revision of AU's quality policy	Vice-Dean for Education 1. February 2022	1. February 2022.
Addition in relation to that the external experts recommended should not have participated in previous programme evaluations of the same programme(s).	Vice-Dean for Education 15. May 2022	15. May 2022
Addition in relation to the academic expert with advantage can have didactic insight	Vice-Dean for Education 5. February 2023	5. February 2023
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