



**BUSINESS SCHOOL**  
AALBORG UNIVERSITY

## *Agenda*

**Aalborg University Business Scho**  
Fibigerstræde 2  
9200 Aalborg Ø

### **Agenda AAUBS Department Council**

**Monday September 23, 2024**

09.30-11.30, Fib 2, room 35

**Members:** Mette Vinther Larsen (formand), Jesper Chrautwald Sort (VIP), Jonas Strømfeldt Eduardsen (VIP), Pernille Gjerløv-Juel (VIP), Michael Simonsen (TAP), Tine Nørgaard (TAP), Robin Katers (ESA), Matthias Glerup Jørgensen (ESA), Hamid Raza (VIP)

**Observers:** Mikael Randrup Byrialsen, Gunnar Rimmel, Dmitrij Slepnirov, Frederik Lundtofte, Christian Østergaard, Michael Dahl, Jacob Brix, Holger Roschk

**Guests:** Allan Næs Gjerding, Jørgen Stamhus and Kristian Nielsen

**Secretary:** Karina Knudsen

## *Agenda*

1. Approval of Agenda (5 min)
2. Approval of Minutes (5 min)
3. Update from the Head of Business School (5 min)
4. Update from Student representatives and Research Groups (15 min)
5. Discussion of and follow-up on the Staff Manager role (20 min)
6. Discussion of the Benchmark-analysis regarding future candidates (10 min)
7. Discussion about students with unique characteristics (10 min)
8. Follow-up on academic year "studiestart" and enrollment 2024 (Annual Cycle of work) (20 min)
9. Follow-up on SSH-agreement "Målaftale" (Annual Cycle of work) (10 min)
10. Communication from the meeting (5 min)
11. AOB (5 min)



### 1. Approval of Agenda (5 min)

*Explanation: Approval of the agenda for the meeting*

Notes: The agenda was approved.

A question was asked about the item regarding the reorganization of the administration, which has been on the agenda several times. Mette Vinther Larsen will inform the entire department in the upcoming Friday email and at the employee-meeting about the new organisational change in the administration.

### 2. Approval of Minutes (5 min)

*Appendix: Minutes from AAUBS Department Council meeting on May 27th, 2024*

*Explanation: Approval of minutes from AAUBS Department Council meeting on May 27th, 2024*

Notes: The Minutes from the meeting May 27th, was approved.

### 3. Update from the head of Business school (5 min)

*Explanation: Mette will give an update on:*

#### **AAUBS strategy**

*The status of the AAUBS Strategy process is that colleagues at AAUBS are in the process of making stakeholder analysis, that will be presented to the strategy group and included in the program for the AAUBS seminar on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> November, where day two (21<sup>st</sup> November) is reserved for the AAUBS strategy process. Mette will meet with the strategy group in September to ensure that the findings from the research evaluation is to be integrated in the AAUBS strategy. Furthermore, Mette also presented some of her visions and ambitions for AAUBS as an integrated aspect of her hiring process. These aspects are also to be presented and discussed as an integrated aspect of the AAUBS strategy. During September Mette will present and discuss these ideas with the strategy group, RGL, PC, staff managers and collegial organs at AAUBS to qualify the ideas and decide how they can be integrated in the overall AAUBS strategy. Lastly, the aspects that must be addressed in the third progress report for AACSB will also be discussed with the strategy group, RGL, PC, staff managers and collegial organs at AAUBS so we ensure coherence and integration between the two processes.*

#### **AAUBS seminar**

*20-21 November, Rebuild Comwell, Støvring. There are rooms for everyone, so Mette has encouraged all colleagues to spend the night. We start at 8.30 on the 20th and end with lunch on the 21st at 13.00. On the first day we focus on AI and our further competence development, where the morning will be focused on shared presentations and showcases on prompt engineering, AAU rules & regulations and demonstration of co-pilot. The afternoon will be held in two tracks: one for the Administration where they will be introduced to how the Administration at AAU work with AI and then a 2,5-hour workshop on co-pilot, where colleagues get to work with and test co-pilot. For researchers there will be seven different workshops related to using AI in teaching and research. Each colleague can participate in two workshops. A catalogue of the different workshops will be circulated before the seminar, so colleagues can express their interest in the workshops they find most interesting. On the second day, we focus on the AAUBS strategy and work with the stakeholder analysis that has been conducted, the research evaluation, AACSB accreditation aspects etc. and start identifying and prioritizing AAUBS's unique value proposition, culture and ambitions. Roman, Sara and Camilla have agreed to arrange social activities during the day.*

#### **Candidate reform**

*The news about the candidate reform can be given very shortly as there is no news yet. We suspect to hear the outcome of the reform this Fall.*



### **AACSB accreditation**

*In relation to the coming AACSB accreditation and handing in our third progress report, we have been asked to look into and ensure we can provide four things; 1) a fully developed AAUBS strategy with action plans, KPI's and resources set aside; 2) make sure we meet the criteria for categorizing our faculty; 3) be more explicit on what we perceive as and how we count intellectual contributions at AAUBS; 4) Illustrate how we are able to close the loop regarding the further development of our teaching and ensure we continue working on strengthening the quality in our teaching. Ihsan Zakri, who is our AACSB Staff Liason will come and visit us on the 5<sup>th</sup> November where he will meet with colleagues and provide feedback on our third progress report. Peter Letmathe, who is our AACSB mentor will also come and visit us the 4<sup>th</sup> December and support us in developing our third progress report.*

### **Research evaluation**

*The third of July Ina, Søren and Mette had a meeting with the panel, where they presented their recommendations to us. We received these in writing mid-July. The written recommendations will be included in the final report, that you all will get, but I will share them in a word file with you tomorrow in my Friday mail. The panel unfolded what they in overall terms presented to us on the 19th June:*

- 1. A need for a strong and joint AAUBS strategy*
- 2. A clear articulation of AAUBS' thought leadership*
- 3. A joint, relevant and inspiring talent development milieu created around strategic ideas of group composition and recruitment strategies*
- 4. A more coherent and joint AAUBS – within the research groups, across the research groups and in collaboration with SSH, AAU and society in general*
- 5. Strategic management support to both established and new research groups – especially related to external funding and research cohesion*
- 6. Strengthen positive reinforcement and virtuous circles regarding core pillars at AAUBS; external funding, career development, publications and societal impact.*

*There are unique group aspects that we will also discuss with the groups.*

*In the period from September until December, Mette will make sure the findings from the research evaluation is presented, discussed and qualified with SSH Faculty, staff managers, PC, RGL, SaMIU, the strategy team so we ensure that these findings are closely linked to the further strategic development of AAUBS.*

**Recording of the meeting via Teams:** *We suggest as we move forward that we test out Microsoft Teams and the system's ability to transcribe and make a summary of the meeting.*

*Follow up:*

- AACSB accreditation – Mette Vinther Larsen will organize two informal information meetings – one aimed at students at AAUBS, and one aimed at colleagues at AAUBS. The purpose is to inform about the process and be in dialogue as to why we are pursuing this accreditation and how it affects our everyday practice. Not done yet*
- Mette Vinther Larsen will work on developing an overview of the different kinds of leaders and identify who decides what. In process*

*Update from the head of Business school will only be discussed in the meeting if members have questions.*

**Notes:**

*DC (Department Council) asked about KPIs in relation to AACSB. We are not allowed to avoid having KPIs, but we ourselves help define which ones we want to measure, and then it is important to find some where we can*



show that a development is taking place. For example, it may be that we want the students to have PBL competences, and how we can measure that they are getting better at this, or that we stay on track. We should not have KPIs on everything, but on the factors that matter and where KPI's can help us track our progress.

In relation to the Master's degree reform, we need to have a decision from the government before start taking action and go more into the discussion. What is important is that we do not end up in a situation where we have A and B educations. We need to create attractive and competitive education programs across the country. There is an ongoing dialogue among the National Head of Studies in Denmark, and everyone agrees that the candidate reform should not be distorting competition.

On the positive side, it may give us an opportunity to develop a lot of exciting executive educations/courses. And it is extremely important we seize this moment as a possibility to develop really attractive master programs that support the unique value proposition at AAUBS.

DC asked about a brief status in relation to the strategy, and in this connection it can be mentioned that the Professor Council, among others, has been assigned to conduct stakeholder analyses. The strategy group has had meetings with all the research groups and all of them take the process seriously. There are about 25 colleagues working on the stakeholder analyses, which we will discuss together on day 2 of our AAUBS Seminar in November.

By the end of 2024, we must have complete function descriptions for all roles.

#### **4. Update from Student representatives and Research Groups (10 min)**

*Explanation: Short update around table*

Notes:

None of the research group leaders participated in the meeting.

The student representatives asked if it was possible to create an association like the Student Society at AAUBS. The Student Society is responsible for many things overall at AAU and receives grants from AAU. At Economics and Business Administration and Oecon, they have their own student associations, ESA and ØF, but unfortunately money cannot be channeled from the Student Society to our own associations.

Today, AAUBS supports the study start and the tutors. ESA and ØF are encouraged to make a wish list with specific wishes that they would like support for. Perhaps there will be an opportunity for AAUBS to provide a grant together with other sponsors. However, it must be study-related.

It should be mentioned that the work of ESA and ØF is greatly appreciated.

#### **5. Discussion of and follow-up on the Staff Manager role (20 min)**

*Explanation: We will revisit and discuss the Staff Manager role*

- *Jørgen and Allan will tell us about their observations from the first half-year*
- *The Department Council will give their assessment of how the role has worked*
- *Input for further development of the role*

Notes:

72 Employee Development Talks have been conducted and, in some instances, follow up talks were necessary.



In general colleagues were well prepared and engaged in the talks. Main discussion points have been balancing teaching and research, career development, management support and the pressure for acquiring external funding.

They clearly experienced a need for MUS from colleagues. People have a need to voice and discuss their worries and be acknowledged. Furthermore, it was also mentioned that MUS can be an important tool for the inclusion of international staff.

The newly adopted background material for the talks functioned well overall. All talks revolved around the four themes with individual adaptations. The summaries from the MUS talks are made by the individual employee, and it works well.

The conversations are important for the employees. At the same time, these conversations also create some expectations that something will be done. It obliges. We must therefore continue to follow up and support.

Next year, it has also been decided that the administrative staff will be invited to Employee Development Talks via Outlook, so that you do not have to ask for an interview yourself.

It was suggested that an attempt should be made to pick up on the various themes that have been dealt with at the Employee Development Talks and bring them to e.g. SAMiU.

There is no fully developed function description for Staff Managers, which is aligned with what was agreed with SaMIU and the DC, but work is underway to have one ready by the end of 2024. It is important to have transparency in relation to who does what and what decision-making mandate the Staff Manager has, e.g. in relation to hours and other things.

The Staff Manager can advise in connection with hours and teaching, but any wishes in relation to this must be brought up at the staffing plan meetings, where a long-term plan must be worked on by the involved parties; head of study, HOBS, head of study board and the staff managers.

Another point of attention is, for example, that it can be difficult for some colleagues to bring something up in a research group meeting or talk with their research group leader about. In those cases it makes sense to reach out to one's staff manager and find a constructive way forward.

As the description of function for staff managers is developed, there must be clear guidelines for when to go to the research group leaders and when to go to the staff manager.

The Staff Manager must be active and create value.

A draft of the function description will be presented at the next DC-meeting.

## **6. Discussion of the Benchmark-analysis regarding future candidates (10 min)**

*Explanation: To make sure that AAUBS are ready for the possible candidate reform and on a more general level be able to benchmark the education portfolio AAUBS offers on a master level, Trine and Louise from our Quality team has together with Mette worked on generating a benchmark analysis of AAUBS compared to other international business schools. The benchmark has been based on the following criterias:*

- 1. The business school must be AACSB accredited.*
- 2. They must offer 1-year graduate programs.*
- 3. They must use a teaching methodology and didactic similar to ours/PBL.*

*Mette will present the overall findings and invite you into discussing what you think is relevant and interesting in relation to the further development of the education portfolio at AAUBS.*

*The report might not be ready to submit prior to the meeting. if that is the case, the report will be shared subsequently.*



**Notes:**

The report will be shared with everyone. It will be made in both Danish and English, and there will also be a small pixi edition (executive summary). 13 Business Schools are included in the study.

The Benchmarkanalysis shows what our students indicate creates interesting and developing learning environments for them and that are cases, guest lectures, physical and not online teaching, extra-curricular activities, more electives, possibility to specialize earlier, PBL and smaller classes.

Our employers demand that our candidates are theoretical strong, independent, can work in groups (PBL), collaborate with the industry and have digital tools.

The analysis also shows what other international business schools that are somewhat similar to us are doing in their 1-year Master's programmes. They have a pedagogy that is a little similar to ours and at the same time they are triple crown accredited. In addition, there are some general recommendations that we can try to look into when we want to revisit our Master's programmes. Interviews have been held with Edinburgh, Lund and Kings College.

What has become apparent in the Benchmarkanalysis is an emphasis on some of the things we ourselves are thinking about, and what we want to strengthen even further like PBL, group work and extracurricular activities. In that aspect the findings fit very well with what the students are asking for. However, a central question is whether this is what the students really want, or whether it is just something they say. Or maybe how we jointly with the students could develop these initiatives so they are attractive.

The report also shows what the structure of the other Business Schools is. Many of the 1-year Master's programmes, for example, do not have a Master's Thesis.

Another pattern that emerges based on the interviews with the business schools is, among other things, that they have an extra annual cycle running around the education with extra-curricular activities, where they put a lot of effort into getting the students onboarded in social activities. Students have a mentor on the teaching side, a mentor out to the industry and a peer to peer. It is very well organised so that it is not placed during the peak periods when the students have to study for exams. It was also expressed that one of the business schools received more applications after they have switched from a 2-year to a 1-year Master's programme.

There are therefore several things that are relevant to discuss further.

DC expressed that it could be exciting to have a Business School annual cycle consisting of extra-curricular activities, which would then be mandatory, scheduled and applied in all Master's specialisations. Open days and visit from upper secondary schools, should also be applied in the annual cycle.

It also emerged that it could be a great challenge to communicate that our master's degree programmes are not an inferior product, even though we only have 75 ECTS credits and the other universities have 120 ECTS. The awareness of what we want to stand for therefore becomes even clearer. One of the things you could do is to strengthen PBL, and this can be done, among other things, in connection with business collaboration. It is important to consider whether the 15 ECTS project should be placed at the end or whether it can, for example, be considered on an ongoing basis in connection with a collaboration with a company. For example, the career fair can also be placed at the beginning of the education instead of at the end.

## **7. Discussion about students with unique characteristics (10 min)**

*Explanation: The number of students with unique characteristic is growing and at the current moment between 20 and 25% of our young adults have a diagnosis. At the current moment AAUBS invites some of these students into our programs based with SPS support. However, due to this development it is worthwhile to investigate if AAUBS should and could take a larger societal responsibility when it comes to these students. And if we should do so, what is then needed to make sure both students and colleagues are comfortable with being in these learning spaces? These are complex questions with no clear answer and therefore we need to start discussing what our role should be regarding this.*



*Mette will present some of the possibilities that already are in place and open up for a dialogue about the considerations and responsibilities that are related to this.*

Notes:

The topic has previously been presented to the management group and is a wish of Mette Vinther Larsen, as we can see that our students with unique characteristics, diagnoses and challenges are increasing and are now between 20 and 25%.

So far, we primarily have knowledge of the use of SPS support in collaboration with the study board. However, it can be a challenge in the learning spaces, as the teachers may not be aware of the challenges that may exist. Therefore, it can be difficult to design learning spaces that will be a good learning experience for all parties.

Until now, these students have not taken up much space, so it has worked ok, but more and more of them are coming and the Study Boards are getting more cases, so there is a need to look into how this setup could look like. How many students are involved and what can we offer? What kind of learning spaces should we have and how many students can we admit to each programme so that they are still part of our regular programmes.

DC expressed that as a teacher, you often lack tools to help the students, as it is often mental health challenges they have. There is always someone on every course where extra resources are needed. There is a lack of knowledge at the organisational level, and the teachers need to be prepared. There should be no individual considerations, but you may be able to make a teaching space that can accommodate the majority. There is a need for more structure and possibly also more mentoring.

By 2030, everyone, regardless of unique characteristics, must have access to all education and workplaces on an equal level with everyone else. At the moment, there is a limit to how many people with these challenges that apply to our programmes, but it is becoming more and more.

There are only very few that OLIVIA is involved in. Most of them are handled by the Study Board. The SPS office can help, as many students have also had challenges in high school. In addition, we have the counsellors from the study and well-being department, which is geared and trained to handle these students.

We need to map out as much knowledge as possible about what the situation looks like, what kind of students are applying to AAUBS, and what we can offer. Then we can find out what our role as a Business School is.

## **8. Follow-up on academic year (studiestart) and enrollment 2024 (20 min)**

*Explanation: Kristian Nielsen will give an update on the academic year and the enrollment for 2024.*

Notes:

Kristian gave a presentation of the admission numbers for 2024 (see appendix).

In relation to the Bachelor's programmes, there is generally a good intake.

The number of applications to the EBA was very high. We have not been involved in looking at the applications and making professional assessments. It runs through the admissions office, and there are some very specific rules. There are a lot of students who have been rejected in the first round, where the international students have applied, and then you must not be allowed to let more students in the second round, even if they are qualified. It has been investigated whether we can do something about it, but it is not something we can just decide, as it is something that affects all programmes at AAU. This year, 3 have been rejected, who could possibly have entered the second round. Malene Gram has been informed about it, and we will try to be proactive about it next year.

Compared to the Danish Master's programmes, economics has received 31 students, which is fine. Financial Management has several vacancies, but it has stagnated a bit in the last few years. This can be because it runs in Danish, but also that Finance and Business Data Science can be competitors to it. Organization, strategy and



management have not been filled either, but auditing, on the other hand, has had a good intake both the 2-year programme and the 4-year programme.

In relation to the English Master's programmes, the intake has been very good and this indicates that it is on the international specialisations we find most of our students.

### **9. Follow-up on SSH-agreement “Målaftale” (10 min)**

*Explanation: Mette will present the new process for the coming SSH-agreement “Målaftale” and some of the aspects that all SSH departments have to report back on and what is more open for discussion.*

Notes: Not addressed in the meeting – Mette Vinther will send an update.

### **10. Communication from the meeting (5 min)**

*Explanation: What do we need to communicate from the meeting?*

Notes:

- The Benchmark report will be sent out to all employees.
- We want to pay attention to students with unique characteristics and initiate a process where we seek knowledge about the subject and what we can do locally.
- Function descriptions must be made for all roles.

### **11. AOB (5 min)**

*Explanation:*

Notes:

If there are items for the AOB, these must be submitted well in advance of the meetings, so that we can add them to the agenda.

Mette agreed to follow up on a few items;

- Financial result for AAUBS for 2024 – this was presented on the 26<sup>th</sup> September and mentioned in the Friday mail on the 27<sup>th</sup> September
- New Head of Research at AAUBS – this was presented in the Friday mail on the 27<sup>th</sup> September
- Interim organising of the Administration – this was presented during morning coffee on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October
- Process for hiring of new Head of Administration – this was presented during morning coffee on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October