

Memo

Proposals for following up on the internal review at the Faculty of Arts

Background

On 13 November 2013 the board approved the senior management team's plan to follow up on the academic development process. The objective was to identify and address the most significant problems facing the university in the wake of the major reorganisations that had taken place. On 15 August 2014 the senior management team presented its proposals for following up on this problem analysis. After a consultation process, the senior management team presented its decisions on 22 October. The proposals and subsequent decisions required the faculties to review the way their departments are organised as well as other issues. Following a big meeting at the Faculty of Arts on 18 August, the faculty management team decided to invite input from all staff and students with a view to reviewing the faculty's internal organisation, and to set up a working group to consider this input and then communicate its views to the faculty management team. The working group considered the input (almost 60 different contributions were received) in the review process, and on 7 October presented the faculty management team with a range of thoughts and proposals regarding potential changes in the faculty's internal organisation. The faculty management team also held a joint meeting on 28 October with the Faculty Liaison Committee and the Academic Council. The proposals outlined in this document are based on the input received from staff and students, the meeting with the working group, and the meeting with the Faculty Liaison Committee and the Academic Council.

The goal of the review is to organise the faculty so it supports our core academic activities as effectively as possible, as well as ensuring the highest possible degree of staff and student satisfaction.

On the one hand, the comments received from staff and students reveal that people want the decision-making process connected with the review to be concluded as soon as possible to prevent protracted uncertainty regarding basic organisational structures. On the other hand, the comments show that the organisation should take greater account of differences in local circumstances at our departments than has

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been the case in the past. The comments also reveal a clear wish for staff inclusion when designing local organisational changes.

The faculty management team has tried to comply with these wishes by insisting that the faculty's decision-making process should be concluded by mid-December, and by allowing parallel internal discussions at our departments and centres with a view to finding local solutions. Such discussions should only be launched if the proposed departmental structure has gained support in the consultation process. The plan is to conclude the actual review process by mid-December, although some issues may need to be considered at greater length.

As mentioned below, a process will also be launched to focus on the organisation of the administration of the Faculty of Arts in extension of the senior management team's decision of 22 October.

In the proposals presented here, the faculty management team has sought to comply with the strong wish for greater flexibility that has been expressed. It should be underlined that the decision regarding the organisation of the faculty should naturally not preclude the organisation from being adapted to suit a variety of needs and challenges in future.

Faculty units

The input as well as the working group's response have revealed that fundamental changes in the departmental structure at the Faculty of Arts are regarded as inexpedient at present. There is no general wish to change the existing structure (three large departments). Support for the departmental structure depends on solutions being found for the challenges facing the current departments, and on the opportunities of the departments for solving their core academic tasks – including external commitments.

Nor should it be forgotten that the faculty has two campuses – so there is a particular need to strengthen the local organisation of the Department of Education, and to ensuring a more accessible management with closer ties to both subject environments at Aarhus Campus.

Proposal 1) The faculty management team proposes that the basic division of the faculty into three large departments should be maintained.

The role and organisational location of the Centre for Teaching Development and Digital Media (CUDiM) have been discussed in a number of comments, some of which have mentioned increased collaboration with the Department of Education being one of the themes as one possibility.. The faculty management team has also announced a wish for better synergy between the faculty environments in the fields of learning, didactics and education, and for a consolidation of CUDiM's activities. Based on this

wish and the comments that have been received, the potential for closer links between the Department of Education at Aarhus Campus and CUDiM will be explored. It is possible that increased collaboration would contribute to promoting the profile of educational theory at upper-secondary and university level as well as the role of the digital media in an educational perspective at AU. It is also possible that it would create closer links between CUDiM and the overall activities of the Department of Education – including the development of a special profile for these activities in Aarhus. In combination with a joint board of studies, closer links between the academic environments at CUDiM and the Department of Education could boost the synergy between the faculty's considerable assets in the fields of learning, didactics and education. This kind of development process will require special decision-making competences in the subject environments and local management, thereby providing special opportunities for the inclusion of staff and students in local development work.

Proposal 2) The faculty management team proposes that it should launch a process aimed at identifying the potential for closer organisational and physical links between the Department of Education at Aarhus Campus and CUDiM. This process must include the staff and students who may be affected by any changes that are made – including union representatives. The process will be carried out by the faculty management team in cooperation with the parties involved – in particular department and centre managements and liaison bodies at the Department of Education and CUDiM. It will start at the beginning of 2015 and end in April 2015.

Following the decisions presented in the senior management team's report of 9 March 2011, the Counselling and Support Unit became part of CUDiM. The decision in 2011 resulted in a division between the academic and administrative tasks affiliated with the SPS unit for students with special needs. The academic activities devolved on CUDiM, while the administrative tasks were taken over by AU Studies Administration (back office). The expediency of this division should be reconsidered. In purely academic terms, the staff have expressed great satisfaction with the idea of being linked to an educational centre, since this has given a considerable boost to their academic activities. But placing these activities under a faculty has also created significant financial challenges and organisational complexity, so there is good reason to reconsider the location of the centre. The senior management team is currently discussing the possibility of changing the organisational location of the Counselling and Support Unit.

The faculty and the centre wish to discuss this issue with the senior management team.

Proposal 3) The faculty management team also proposes that it undertake an investigation of how continued collaboration between RSE and CUDiM best can be ensured.

Under the decision of 9 March 2011, the Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (CEI) was placed under the Faculty of Arts even though it develops and supports activities for the whole of AU. The senior management team has discussed the option of changing the organisational location of the CEI. In connection with the review process, the Faculty of Arts will submit its proposal regarding the location of the CEI to the senior management team. The faculty wishes to continue its academic cooperation with the CEI, no matter where the CEI is located.

During the review process, comments were received from the Danish Centre for Culture and Learning (DCL). The DCL's organisational location and tasks will be considered as part of the administrative process described below.

Academic identity, visibility and sections of departments

The problem analysis and many of the comments that have been received reveal that the creation of large departments has led to problems regarding academic identity and visibility; and that consequently there is a great need for improvements in both of these two areas.

Proposal 4) To improve visibility and academic identity at our departments, the faculty management team proposes that the department heads should launch local processes with a view to suggesting meaningful names for our departments and sections.

The Department of Education has a slightly different need for visibility than the other departments. There is a need to raise the profile of the department as a whole as a player in the world around us – particularly vis-à-vis the education sector. A wish has been expressed for greater flexibility for the Department of Education in their collaboration with external partners.

It must be ensured the departments and their managements have the opportunity to cultivate their existing cooperation and contacts with external partners.

Initiatives that contain institutional commitments on behalf of the university or faculty, or which affect other departments, academic areas etc., will continue to be faculty business.

The idea of calling our departments “schools” to create greater external visibility has been discussed before. It is worth considering whether the visibility of the Department of Education and other academic environments could be improved by replacing the terms “departments” and “sections” by “schools” and “departments” respectively. “School” is often used in English to describe an academic unit above the level of “department”. The use of these terms could help to underline the efforts to ensure greater local freedom that are outlined below.

Proposal 5) The faculty management team proposes that the faculty should replace the terms “departments” and “sections” by “schools” and “departments” respectively.

The Danish terms institut and afdeling will not be changed.

The decision to retain the faculty's large departments has generated a need to improve the internal organisation with a view to improving the support provided in the fields of research, education and research-based consultancy. Most of the comments that have been received and the meetings that have been held reveal that our departments should be divided into smaller units in extension of the adjustment of faculty organisation that was agreed in January 2014. In other words, there is a wish to strengthen the identity of the various sections of our large departments – particularly at DAC and CAS.

— The departmental sections will constitute the focus of collegial cooperation in core academic areas (including education and research-based public-sector consultancy), as well as being a fulcrum for accessible management. The department heads will delegate staff responsibility for academic staff to the heads of section, who will be included in the management of the department. For instance, the heads of section will conduct staff development dialogues and discussions about opportunities for staff – including PhD students employed by AU (see below). The heads of section will be responsible for academic development (including the development of degree programmes), and for aligning the profile of the degree programmes with the relevant research base (including public-sector consultancy). One or more programme coordinators can be appointed to support some of the educational tasks of the heads of section.

— *Proposal 6) The faculty management team proposes that the introduction of sections should continue as decided in January 2014, but that the tasks and functions of the heads of section should be given greater flexibility so local needs (at the Department of Education, for instance) can be met – including the special demands associated with the Department of Education/Aarhus.*

— The strengthening of sections at CAS and the Department of Education will be based on the established sectional structure. If it proves necessary to make minor adjustments of this structure, the faculty management team proposes that the department heads should launch internal departmental discussions about the issues involved, which must be concluded before the Faculty Liaison Committee and Academic Council hold the final meetings about the review process in December 2014.

DAC will start an internal process focusing on how many sections there should be and how they should be divided. This process will be aligned with the corresponding discussions of the number of boards of studies. The department will conclude the internal discussions before the final meetings of the Faculty Liaison Committee and Academic Council to discuss the review process in December 2014.

In extension of the wish for stronger sections, we need to consider the additional decision-making frameworks within which they operate and the additional powers that should be delegated to the heads of section.

Proposal 7) To meet the need for flexibility at section level, the faculty management team proposes that the department heads investigate how to establish a better, clearer framework for the activities of heads of section. In particular, good practice should be adopted with a view to including representative bodies and subject environments from departments and centres when new positions are created. This must be done in cooperation with the current heads of section, including the relevant liaison bodies.

Organisation of degree programmes – boards of studies and degree programme committees

One significant objection to the current structure regarding the organisation of our degree programmes is that it has prevented all our subjects and academic areas from being represented directly in the board of studies. A lot of people have also pointed out that individual subjects or academic areas should be given greater freedom to develop their own degree programmes.

In some circumstances, greater representation of subjects and flexibility will be possible within the existing structure. Elsewhere it may be necessary to change the structure, so there will be differences in the way our departments organise their degree programmes in future.

Proposal 8) The faculty management team proposes that when deemed necessary, an internal process should be launched to identify the best way of organising degree programmes locally (boards of studies, degree programme committees etc.) This process must be concluded before the final meetings of the Faculty Liaison Committee and Academic Council in December 2014.

In part on the basis of the working's groups proposal, it is proposed that IKS retain both of its boards of studies. IUP will retain its joint board of studies and will consider whether establishing a separate board of studies for professional Master's degree programmes is advisable. The Department of Education also faces the special task of strengthening the way degree programmes are organised in Aarhus. It is also proposed that DAC should launch an inclusive process to decide whether more boards of studies (3-5, for instance) could solve the problems that have been reported to individual boards of studies. The internal process should be completed before the final review meetings in December.

One of the points raised has been the idea of changing the way our degree programme committees are organised, including their responsibilities and competences.

Proposal 9) The faculty management team proposes that a working group should be set up at each department to establish clearer local frameworks for the work of the degree programme committees and their role in relation to boards of studies and sections – including a clearer allocation of tasks with regard to subject-related decisions between the level of our boards of studies and degree programme committees, due regard for CUDiM's educational activities and the adjustment of the representation of staff and students in the work of the degree programme committees. These working groups are welcome to suggest a new name to replace “degree programme committee” if they like.

Once the review has been completed, the faculty management team will meet the Education Committee and boards of studies in 2015 to decide whether there is a need to adjust the framework for collaboration across our departments and boards of studies – including the current activities at CUDiM.

Research programmes

The opinions expressed regarding the importance of our research programmes vary, with some people wanting a more flexible way of organising research. Positive comments have also been received regarding the important role of the research programmes and research committees.

Proposal 10) The faculty management team proposes that participation in research programmes should be voluntary, but that research programmes should continue to be a productive and attractive framework for the research collaboration and research areas of our departments. They could also be used to establish new research areas and cross-disciplinary initiatives.

Once the current research programmes have been evaluated as planned in mid-2015, it will be possible to establish new research programmes. The faculty management team proposes that our research should be organised flexibly, with new programmes and research units originating in the academic environments and being designed to comply with the wishes of our departments.

The departments may wish to establish other research units in addition to the research programmes. It will be possible for each department to use a research coordinator. Each department can decide how to divide tasks between research programme directors and any research coordinators that are appointed.

Organising our PhD programmes

Some people have asked for closer links between the activities of our graduate school – in particular our PhD programmes – and our academic environments. There has also been a wish to retain the PhD degree programme in a graduate school organised under the faculty, which will meet the needs of our PhD students and ensure access to cross-disciplinary PhD activities such as courses and supervision. The faculty man-

agement team believes that the PhD degree programme should continue to be organised in a number of PhD programmes, but that these should be affiliated more closely to departments and sections than they are at present.

Proposal 11) The faculty management team proposes that each of the eight current PhD programmes should be affiliated with the section(s) to which they are most suited in terms of the subject or tasks in question. The affiliated sections will jointly nominate a PhD programme director and members of the PhD programme's standing assessment committee, which is responsible for assessing applicants for PhD scholarships and enrolling PhD students.

The PhD programme directors will continue to perform their current tasks (with the exception of staff management), and will take part in future in the relevant meetings at the sections to which their programme is affiliated. They will also be members of the department's research committee. With a view to anchoring the activities of the PhD programmes more firmly in our sections, sections can appoint PhD coordinators. The graduate school or PhD programme director can decide to delegate local tasks regarding PhD courses, PhD supervision etc. to the PhD coordinator.

Based on many requests from the academic environments, PhD programme directors and PhD students regarding closer links between the PhD programme and our academic environments, the faculty management team believes that our PhD students should be anchored more firmly in our sections.

Proposal 12) The faculty management team proposes that the heads of section should have staff responsibility for the PhD students employed in their section.

In future the PhD programme directors should support the heads of section (for instance when holding staff development dialogues for PhD students) by informing them of the current status regarding the progress of the PhD student concerned. The PhD programme director will arrange discussions resembling staff development dialogues for PhD students who are not employed by AU.

CUDiM's future relationship with the graduate school will depend on CUDiM's organisational location.

Our culture of management and cooperation

In connection with the discussion of organisational issues at the Faculty of Arts, it has been underlined that a good culture of management and cooperation is an important dimension. The comments that have been received do not include any wishes for the introduction of additional liaison bodies. But the need for a management culture characterised by cooperation has been underlined. Among other things, it has been suggested that the members of various forums should help to prepare decisions in faculty and department processes. The forums in question are the Academic Council,

the Faculty Liaison Committee and the PhD Committee at faculty level; and departmental forums, research committees and local liaison committees at department/centre level, as well as the working environment organisation. The faculty management team is convinced that there is a need for carefully targeted efforts to develop an open decision-making culture and inclusive management practice.

Proposal 13) With a view to creating more open decision-making processes, it is proposed that in the near future the chairs of all the liaison bodies at faculty and department/centre level should start discussions about how they could play a part in processes preparing for decisions at departments and the faculty.

— In line with the announcement by the senior management team on 22.10.2014, the individual deans, in consultation with the chair of the Academic Council, decide how the council should be more involved in planning, holding and following up on council meetings, and how to ensure that the council gets the chance to discuss important future decisions before they are made. Similar discussions should be launched with the vice-chair of the Faculty Liaison Committee and the Faculty Working Environment Committee and the chair of the PhD Committee.

— The faculty management team has also registered a general wish that the Dean's Office should strengthen and broaden the dialogue and intensify the contact with our academic environments and existing liaison bodies with regard to the core activities of our departments, CUDiM and the faculty. There is a particular need for the dean to be available for dialogue with the academic environments, the students and the departmental/centre liaison bodies. The Dean's Office will also intensify its participation in meetings with the academic environments and local liaison bodies at the departments and the centre— including regular meetings with representatives and organisations elected by the students.

All major proposed decisions by faculty and department/centre management bodies will be matched by discussions in the faculty and department liaison bodies.

— All major decisions of significance for the faculty – including financial issues and staffing plans – will be made by the faculty management team under the management of the dean following discussions in the relevant liaison bodies. The department heads and the director of CUDiM are part of the faculty management team, and must also ensure that the viewpoints and interests of their units are expressed in the faculty management team – not least viewpoints arising during discussions in the department's/centre's liaison bodies. The dean is responsible for ensuring that viewpoints expressed in the Academic Council, Faculty Liaison Committee, PhD Committee and elsewhere are included in the faculty management team's discussions.

Similarly, decisions at department level after discussion in the relevant liaison bodies will be made by the department/centre management team under the management of

the department head/centre director. The heads of section are part of the department management team, and must also ensure that the viewpoints and interests of their section are expressed in the department management team – not least viewpoints arising during section meetings, for instance. Similarly, the department head/centre director is responsible for ensuring that viewpoints arising in the department/centre forum, local liaison committees etc. are included in the department/centre management team's discussions.

The faculty management team believes that the organisation and the way we work should provide the best possible support for initiatives based on the wishes of staff and students either locally or in the relevant liaison bodies.

Once he/she has been appointed, the new dean will decide how to organise the Dean's Office.

One particular problem relates to the organisation of liaison committees, because a large group of administrative staff in our front offices has been transferred to the faculty's administrative centre, and thereby to the faculty. The staff changes mean that issues of staff representation will have to be reviewed.

Proposal 14) The faculty management team proposes that owing to the senior management team's decision to reorganise the administration, discussions should be launched at faculty and department level about how the Academic Cooperation Association's representatives can be included more effectively in discussions in the central liaison bodies of our departments.

The budget

Since the faculty was formed, the faculty management team has been working to create a financial basis that not only ensures the smoothest possible merger of the three former faculties but is also based on the principle of solidarity. The result is a financial model that promotes solidarity, ensures strategic focus areas including national commitments, and takes the performance-linked allocation of funding from the state budget into account. This model has been used to determine the faculty and departmental budget for 2015.

Proposal 15) The faculty management team proposes that the current model with the departments as the central financial units should be retained, but that the faculty management team should reconsider the balance principles in the financial model once the review has been completed and the organisational changes have been finalised. This will be done in 2015 in connection with the budget for 2016 at the Faculty of Arts.

The transparency of each department's resource base must be established, including staffing ratios in relation to tasks and earnings. The basic department-based budget

model is to be retained, so the heads of section will not be given budget responsibility. Instead, following the decision of the department management team they will be given a financial framework to perform their tasks. The head of section, department head and director of studies will decide on the need for (and nature of) appointments of part-time academic staff. The sections will be involved in departmental discussions of the need for appointments in relation to resources and requirements.

Administration

Following the senior management team's decision of 22.10 regarding the future administrative organisation of AU, AU front office (the faculty's administrative centre) will refer to the faculty's administration centre manager, who will refer to the dean and the university director. Parallel to the consultation process regarding the review, a process will be carried out focusing on the way the faculty's administration is organised.

The faculty management team has registered the broad wish for greater accessibility and more dialogue with regard to administrative tasks, including administrative resources to support the tasks performed by the sections, boards of studies, PhD programmes and others. In connection with the process focusing on administration at the faculty, we will be investigating how the administrative support provided for our departments can be strengthened.

The faculty management team believes that it is important to strengthen the collegial collaboration between technical/administrative and academic staff to perform administrative tasks and generate greater mutual understanding for the professionalism of all groups of staff, thereby developing a good culture of cooperation.

What happens next?

On commencement of the consultation process, the heads of the three departments will draw up a plan of action for the local departmental processes. After the consultation process (deadline: 5 December), a decision will be made regarding the conclusions of the review in mid-December. The decision may contain sub-decisions making it necessary to perform further diagnosis or inclusive processes to resolve any outstanding questions. Any changes of the departments are subject to the decision of the board.

At the start of 2015 a plan will be drawn up regarding how to carry out the changes that have been decided. At the same time, the faculty management team will present a tentative process plan regarding proposal 2, if proposal 2 is adopted in December. This assumes that any follow-up processes of diagnosis and inclusion are concluded by the summer of 2015. The changes that have been decided will take effect no later than 1 January 2016.