

## AAU Framework for Advancing University Pedagogy

### Background

Universities Denmark has developed and adopted the *Danish Framework for Advancing University Pedagogy* (Framework) as a common tool. Based on this shared understanding, the Framework must be implemented with respect for the institution's distinctive features. The Framework is based on recommendations from the Ministry of Higher Education and Science's publication [Fremtidens Meritering](#): [The Future of Advancing University Research and Pedagogy] that recommends the following elements:

- Teaching must be a professional domain for academic staff characterized by openness, feedback and professional development
- Assessment of teaching competencies must always be included in the recruitment of academic staff
- The universities must set standards for the upskilling of teaching competencies
- A uniform practice for documenting teaching competencies must be developed

Additionally, the Framework supports the job structure that mentions that the university must have a plan for maintaining and developing pedagogical-didactic competencies. With regard to the job structure, all staff members with teaching duties must discuss with their superior on a regular basis how to best maintain and/or develop pedagogical-didactic competencies.

### University pedagogy under PBL

At AAU, problem-oriented and interdisciplinary learning is the strategic foundation for all learning activities where student-centred learning is a central principle and described in, for example, the Study Activity Model. This is reflected in the strategy *Knowledge for the World* and is ensured through [AAU PBL Principles](#) and the [quality system](#) and through the support of the entire management system and the overall pedagogical culture at AAU.

The national framework describes three general levels of pedagogical competence development within the operative space and the collegial community as well as a category for special educational tasks. Thus, the framework makes it possible to assess a total of 24 sub-competencies.

Based on the Framework, it is assumed that a newly hired assistant professor is minimally at level 1 in the operative space and collegial space and thus possesses basic teaching and supervision skills. A newly hired associate professor who has passed the University pedagogical programme must overall be at least at level 2 based on a teaching portfolio at a given time, with some variations towards both levels 1 and 3 as well as in the category of special educational tasks. The experienced professor/associate professor should be placed with the main emphasis on level 3 and elements of the category of special educational tasks.

Thus, the framework and portfolio are linked, and teaching staff can move dynamically in the framework when teaching competencies and thus the portfolio change over time. You should therefore not consider yourself to be lacking development opportunities at any time within the framework matrix. Regardless of how many sub-competencies you master within the matrix, research-based teaching and pedagogical practice are dynamic and changeable. This applies in particular to supervision with problem-based learning based on current problems. This is both the responsibility of the individual teacher and the task of the relevant manager. Against this background, it is important that the framework can be used systematically both for the development of the individual's educational competencies and those of management. At a minimum, the Framework must therefore be introduced as part of the University Pedagogical Programme

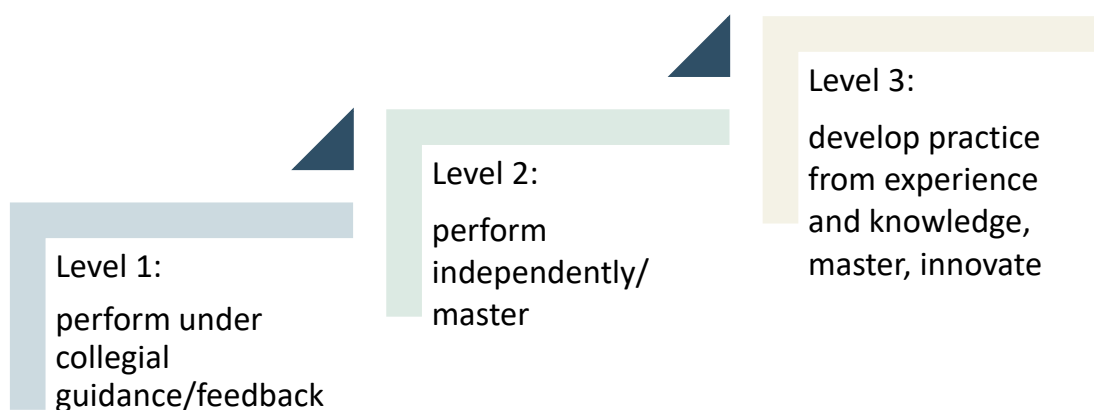
and as part of the general management development at AAU, with a view to developing overall teaching competence across AAU in the collegial space.

AAU implements and operationalizes the Framework with a focus on AAU's two distinctive features: PBL and interdisciplinarity. At the same time, the overall Framework is preserved as special AAU characteristics are not necessarily present in all 24 sub-competencies. In particular, the category for special educational tasks is considered sufficiently comprehensive also in terms of PBL.

PBL is particularly characterized by group-based problem-oriented project work, supervision and group examination. Supervision is a comprehensive task that involves working closely with students. The problem-oriented project work is student-driven, and the problem's fundamental idea can be both monodisciplinary and interdisciplinary. In progressing from level 1 to level 3, an AAU teacher/supervisor who continuously develops their PBL competencies will be continuously including several elements as defined below.

The discussion between the manager and the academic staff member aims to clarify whether the staff member can account for competencies in relation to the following three levels that are achieved through experience and documented systematic reflection through work on the teaching portfolio.

The model below shows PBL competencies within the operative space and collegial space. The three competence levels are described jointly, and sub-competencies within the three competence levels must be assessed in relation to the three levels:



THE OPERATIVE SPACE: TEACHING AND TRAINING IN PRACTICE UNDER PBL – INDIVIDUAL

	<p><b>LEVEL 1 – 3</b></p> <p>Level 1: performs under collegial guidance/feedback          Level 2: performs independently          Level 3: develops practice from experience and knowledge, masters, innovates</p>
<p><b>A TEACHING</b></p>	<p><b>THE ACADEMIC STAFF MEMBER:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• can incorporate key dimensions of PBL principles so that students are actively involved in teaching</li> <li>• can incorporate student-driven activities</li> <li>• can maintain focus on both process and product in supervision</li> <li>• can understand the different types of problems and projects, including open and closed problems</li> <li>• can support students in formulating an academically relevant problem</li> <li>• can provide oral and written feedback to students</li> <li>• can use the Study Activity Model in planning teaching</li> </ul>
<p><b>B EXAMINATION</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• can incorporate key dimensions of PBL principles, also during the conduct of the exam, with the result that all students are involved in the exam</li> <li>• can facilitate discussion, create space for reflection, assess the project from a holistic point of view, help the students understand the exam situation</li> <li>• can organize exams and use instruments according to the situation</li> <li>• can assess the academic level and recognize new knowledge in exam situations</li> </ul>
<p><b>C QUALITY ASSURANCE</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• can ensure ongoing evaluation with students under PBL</li> <li>• can ensure dialogue and document the development of their own teaching and PBL practice under PBL</li> <li>• can develop teaching activities based on evaluations and reflections, preferably within the academic environments associated with the teaching activities under PBL</li> </ul>

THE COLLEGIAL SPACE UNDER PBL: TEACHING AND EDUCATION AS COLLEGIAL COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE – COLLEGIAL, THE COLLABORATIVE SPACE

	<p><b>LEVEL 1 – 3</b></p> <p>Level 1: performs under collegial guidance/feedback          Level 2: performs independently          Level 3: develops practice from experience and knowledge, masters, innovates</p>
<p><b>D</b>  <b>COLLABORATION WITH STUDENTS</b></p>	<p><b>THE ACADEMIC STAFF MEMBER:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• can involve external collaboration and research and translate this into PBL practice in supervision</li> <li>• can provide ongoing feedback on the work process and student cooperation in the group, as well as their possible cooperation with external partners</li> <li>• can provide feedback to students about the work process and their mutual cooperation</li> </ul>
<p><b>E</b>  <b>COLLABORATION WITH COLLEAGUES</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• can work in a PBL-based manner in practice and support local academic environments as well as the overall PBL culture at AAU, as part of a teaching group</li> <li>• can participate in developing teaching and supervision practices that take place in a PBL-oriented collegial partnership</li> <li>• can collaborate on the organization and development of PBL practice: projects, external teaching staff</li> <li>• can contribute to implementing strategic educational initiatives, group formation, research</li> </ul>
<p><b>F</b>  <b>COLLABORATION ON QUALITY ASSURANCE</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• can contribute to both didactic guidance with a focus on PBL and problem-oriented project work</li> <li>• can help develop and keep PBL practice and supervision alive</li> <li>• can collaborate on both pedagogical and didactic development of PBL and supervision practice</li> </ul>