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Final*

Aalborg University
Fredrik Bajers Vej 7K
PO Box 159
9220 Aalborg East

Case Officer:
Anne Christoffersen
Telephone: 99409680
Email: achr@create.aau.dk

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Minutes of the meeting in Employer Panel Meeting on June 6, 2023

Participants: Amalia De Götzen, Stefania Serafin, Mette Hvass, Georgios Triantafyllidis, Michael Schmidt, Bjørn Flindt Temte, Sune Wolff, Dripta Roy, Jesper Ravn, Jesper Udesen, Luis Emilio Bruni, Kasper Rodil, Hendrik Knoche, Henrik Schønau Fog, Claus B. Madsen (chair), Nis Ovesen

Unable to attend Claus Holm, Camilla G. Christensen, Simon Lajboschitz, Neo Kaplanis, Allan Ruberg (for the first part) and Runa Sabroe (for the first part).

Other participants: Flemming Løvenhardt Petersen, Signe Søgaard Garp, Christine Pedersen, Anne Christoffersen (minute taker)

Item 1. Approval of the agenda

The agenda was approved, though the agenda (part 2) for MED+SMC and LiD needed very minor adjustments to the timetable.

Corrected agendas will be sent out with the minutes.

Item 2. Welcome and introduction

Nis Ovesen (NO) welcomed the meeting participants while showing a slide with participant names. (The power point will be sent out with the minutes)

Item 3. The composition of the employer panel for the next 4 years

NO announced that this is the last meeting of this employer panel. A new employer panel must be appointed for the next 4-year period starting September 2023.

NO acknowledges that there have been many fruitful discussions in the employer panel and thanked the members for their input and participation.

NO presented the programmes that the panel has covered for the past four years and added that the members represent all the programmes with internal and external members. And that meetings have varied from full panel meetings to education-specific meetings.

There will be some changes in the composition of the employer panel for the next four years:

Internal members:

Since the last appointment, a new organisation has been made internally, with several new functions; program coordinator, career VIP and employability ambassador. And that should be reflected in the internal members.

External members:

Since the last appointment, there have been additional rules for the appointment of external members. As they should also represent central public administrations, trade unions, interest groups etc.

NO had also noticed that some members to meetings have asked: "Am I an actual employer?". And therefore doubted whether they were the right members.

According to the new appointment procedure the department would like to continue to maintain continuity in the panel but at the same time also replace participants with regard to the new appointment rules.

On that background NO informed the members that an email will be sent to them where they can express their interest in continuing as member. Afterwards the new employability ambassador (Flemming Løvenhardt Petersen) and NO will look at the composition.

NO set out to discuss the following:

Inputs to the future composition:

Michael Schmidt (MS) commented that two job functions are missing from the panel. 1) recruitment/HR when it comes to recruiting medialogy graduates and 2) IT consultant – as none of the current members work at e.g., Netcompany. NO found the comment very relevant.

Luis E. Bruni (LEB) asked if there could be international members in the panel. To which NO replied that it could be a possibility and also relevant. Especially if more graduates travel abroad to get a job.

Suggestions for the format of the panel meetings:

NO gave the example of the format for the meeting today, where there is the joint meeting for a start and separate subgroups meetings after. And for instance, MED/SMC will, according to their agenda, receive a presentation from an external well-known researcher which can be the starting point for a subsequent discussion.

Claus B. Madsen (CBM) commented that it is good and efficient to have the meetings online but may also lack something in relation to the physical meeting format.

NO asked how the panel thought of the meetings with the entire employer panel versus the smaller education-specific meetings. NO, himself commented, that it can be difficult to cover all educations broadly with one large panel.

Kasper Rodil (KR) thought that the department could make greater use of the employer panel and that the group of participants is relevant to discuss, so that we cover the labor market - in terms of relevant job functions and by region.

MS asked for a meeting format with more time to go into detail about the curriculum which will give the employer panel members a better opportunity to provide relevant input for adjustments. NO responded that it is something we must work on initiating from the department and probably works best in the smaller education-specific groups.

Bjørn Flindt Temte (BFT) gave a comment on the chat: "Input for format: More frequent meetings – use us as a sounding board of smaller-scope decisions, as a way to decrease the risk that you have blindspots".



Item 4. Employability

NO introduced the next agenda item and presented unemployment figures and initiatives taken at the department in relation to employability. NO also put forward two points for discussion:

Group discussion 1:

Use of AI in the industry

Group discussion 2:

Your need for and use of Lifelong Learning

NO gave the following input before the discussion:

Student admission: There is a slide decline in intake. It is hoped that the CPH intake will be significantly better than the AAL, which in turn, for a few consecutive years, has been slightly lower than anticipated and desired. The declining intake is indeed a national challenge rooted in demographic issues, and it is focusing point for all educational institutions in Denmark. The emphasis is on creating robust educations that are financially viable. Overall graduate unemployment: There is a bit of a struggle with unemployment, and it is therefore highly relevant to work on this the coming years. The target is to get below 10% average unemployment over the entire second year after graduation (4th to 7th quarter).

NO also showed detailed overviews with unemployment for each individual education:

Medialogy, Copenhagen – seems to get an increase in unemployment for 2021 graduates compared to 2020 graduates.

Medialogy, Aalborg – the numbers look very good for the graduates from 2021.

SMC – there are almost no unemployment.

LiD – there are unemployment issues.

SSD – there are unemployment issues.

The design educations struggle. The graduates typically are unemployed longer time after graduation as compared to graduates with a more technical focus.

NO went through status on employability initiatives at the department:

- New employability ambassador
- Analysis of graduates' jobs and paths to first jobs
- Implementation of Career VIP
- Curriculum revisions on multiple educations
- Outreach events in Aalborg and Copenhagen

Jesper Uddesen (JU) asked if the unemployment figures look worse for AAU than for other universities.

NO responded the AAU unemployment figures as a whole are slightly higher than most other institutions in Denmark. This may be due the job market in Region Nord not being as strong as in other regions, but it varies a lot from industry to industry.

NO started the group discussion of the following topics:

Group discussion 1:

Use of AI in the industry: *Is AI part of your industry and how do you think we should accommodate this in our educations?*

Sune Wolff (SW) commented that they have started to investigate it. They have a Ph.D. who works with AI. It will be included in more and more types of work but adding another subject element to an already broad education (Medialogy) will be a challenge.

BFT added and emphasized that there is a difference between teaching how to build new AI or using and developing AI. Many have been using AI for several years. It is crucial to learn how to use the tool, but it is questionable to let the students learn to build the algorithms behind it.

MS drew attention to the fact that there is already some AI in the Medialogy programme, but perhaps some adjustments are needed. He believed that the Medialogy programme is doing quite well in relation of the subject AI.

Jesper Udesen (JU) added that it is an advantage to have a basic understanding of building these tools. He said that his company builds these tools and therefore look at AI skills when recruiting – although not exclusively.

Group discussion 2:

How does our organisation use Continuing Education / Lifelong Learning, and what are your preferred formats?

NO supplemented that the format may vary in relation to the length of the EVU, so is it more likely that you take shorter courses than e.g., 2-year masters?

Jesper Ravn (JR) gave a comment on the chat: “As an architect I can say that continued education is very common, part of our daily life, in fact. Some take masters of two years, others just days. So, all you suggested could be relevant”.

JU commented that at his work they would normally use Teknologisk Institut and find relevant courses there but found it also relevant if AAU could offer courses, in e.g., unity.

Project work is AAU’s DNA, and therefore NO wanted to know if it would be relevant to work together with others from other companies when doing an EVU.

JU announced that it depended on the course. Usually, it will be easier with individual teaching if the purpose of the course is, for example, a pure programming upgrade.

CBM asked if there was a systematic channel for how companies might suggest topics for EVU activities, or if AAU would just propose something and test the market.

NO answered that there is an employee centrally at the faculty who works in the EVU area. She will test concrete proposals for EVU on the market if we have any.

NO thanked the panel for the fruitful discussions and sent the meeting participants out into subgroups:

- Medialogy + Sound and Music Computing
- Service Systems Design
- Lighting Design