GOOD DEPARTMENT MANAGEMENT AT AALBORG UNIVERSITY

AALBORG UNIVERSITET

The head of department is the department's top manager whose most important task is clear and inspiring management that ensures and develops the highest quality in the department's total portfolio of activities. The departments are Aalborg University's academic focal points, which means that good department management is crucial for the entire organisation.

How the head of department may specifically manage depends on several factors, including the current Scheme of Delegation from the Rector, the size of the department, organisation and personality. The head of department refers to the dean, and it is crucial that the head of department understands their own managerial role, which is set forth in the university's statutes and established in conjunction with the dean. The head of department's ability to lead upwards, communication with the dean's office, is important in order to have support and freedom to manage.

The department management is part of the university's overall management, and thus, the heads of departments must manage based on the university's and the faculty's strategy.

Good heads of departments base their management on Aalborg University's Code of Governance, which constitutes a frame of reference for all managers at the university. In this document, the Code of Governance is related to the specific tasks of the head of department.

1.
Contents of department management

The tasks of the head of department can be divided into the following types of management:

1.1
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

· To establish the direction and objectives for the department and take responsibility in relation to the faculty's and AAU's overall ambitions.
· To formulate and implement strategies for the department's overall activities and to ensure the goals are achieved
· To implement cross-cutting strategies approved by the faculty or the Executive Management
· To take a proactive approach to change and innovation requirements
· To be part of the faculty management and contribute to the management of and take responsibility for, for instance, budgetary decisions
· To develop and maintain the department's management and decision-making structures and bodies that ensure staff and student involvement.

1.2
PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT

Degree programmes and teaching activities
· To implement the faculty strategy for the programme portfolio in conjunction with the pro-dean for education
· To ensure the highest quality in the degree programmes and teaching activities in conjunction with the pro-dean for education, head of studies and study board
· To ensure relevant research-based teaching at the programmes of the department and potentially other departments

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- To ensure the best possible structure and implementation of programmes, teaching activities and exams in conjunction with the study board and head of studies in accordance with the current regulations for the area
- To ensure ongoing development of the programmes so that they are robust and match the needs of society and the business community.

Research
- To implement the faculty's research strategy in conjunction with the pro-dean for research
- To ensure the highest research quality, integrity and ethics
- To create attractive research environments for both staff and students
- To ensure the highest quality of research training.

Knowledge collaboration
- To create and utilise new opportunities for communication and knowledge exchange with external partners to ensure sources of funding, new research areas and educational programmes
- To create and utilise new opportunities for communication and knowledge exchange with external partners to ensure that research and education act reciprocally with society thus making a difference.

1.3 ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT

- To create attractive and robust administrative environments in collaboration with the head of the rector's staff
- To ensure that all academic activities are carried out with the best possible use of resources
- To ensure that the department's administration provides a high level of services for the department's staff, students and other administrative units, and that this is done in dialogue with these groups
- To ensure that administration is in accordance with the university's administrative principles and with the best possible use of resources
- To ensure that budgets and regulations in the financial area are observed
- To ensure that the necessary equipment is procured and physical frameworks are established and maintained.

1.4 STAFF MANAGEMENT

- To lead the way by example, to propel the development of the desired culture within your own area and to contribute to the development of a shared AAU culture.
- To ensure a healthy and positive physical, organisational and social working environment for all
- To ensure compliance with the university's staff policy and that regulations within the area are implemented and observed, including regulations regarding equality and diversity
- To ensure management of staff members, which includes making sure that tasks are distributed and solved appropriately
- To ensure management through other managers and to create results through other managers (heads of studies, vice heads of departments, heads of research, head of secretariat, etc.)
- To set targets for and give feedback to individuals and teams while ensuring that both individual and organisational considerations are included
- To ensure that staff members' resources are used efficiently, for example by seeking out

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possibilities for collaboration and shared solutions, also outside the department
· To pave the way for the establishing of professional and interpersonal relations with internal and external partners and stakeholders
· To identify and develop prospective managers.
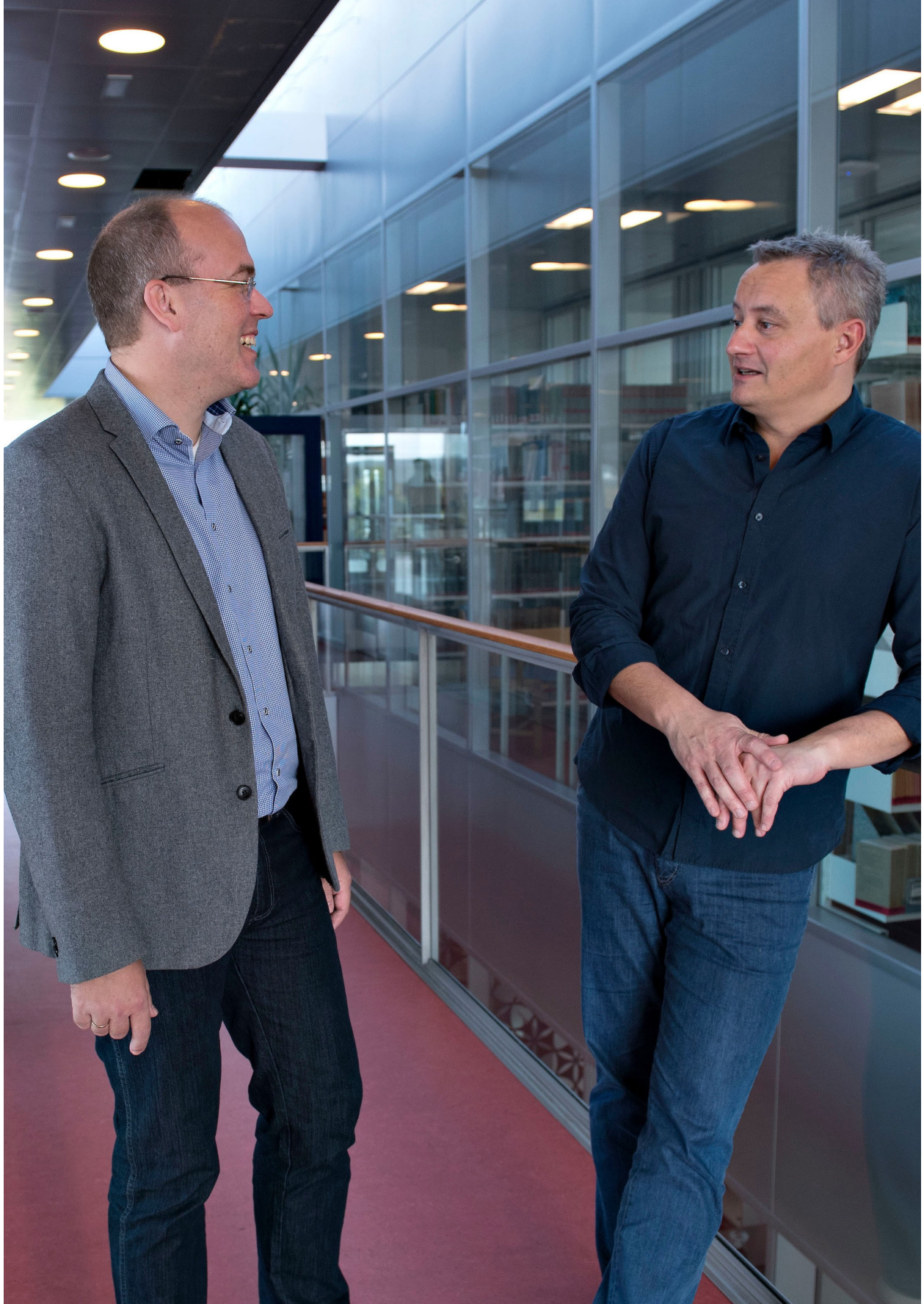
2. Requirements for department management

2.1 MANAGERIAL AUTHORITY

Like other managers, the job of the head of department is to manage and distribute the workload. This is done as part of the managerial role that, in accordance with the current Scheme of Delegation, has been delegated to the head of department from the Rector through the dean as a letter of delegation.

2.2 STAFF AND STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

Staff and student involvement contributes to constructive decision making as it strengthens the basis for making good decisions. Furthermore, it generates a sense of co-ownership which increases job satisfaction and the quality of work.

Therefore, the head of department must ensure involvement from academic staff, technical/administrative staff as well as students in order to solve all department tasks. Among other things, this is done through the fora established in response to legislation and regulations, such as department councils, study boards, consultation committees and occupational health and safety (OHS) committees.

Consultation committees
Staff involvement is important for achieving high quality decisions and ensuring staff influence on organisational and technological changes, while contributing to a positive working environment.

Consultation committees are natural fora for discussions between management and staff regarding the development and future of the

workplace. Topics relating to work organisation, working conditions, competence development and staff policy are discussed in the consultation committees. Furthermore, emphasis is placed on discussing the psychological working environment in the consultation committees.

Thus, consultation committee tasks revolve around topics that traditionally belong under the managerial authority. At department level, the head of department will typically chair the consultation committee.

Occupational health and safety committee
All companies with employees must address health and safety. The head of department must organise the work on health and safety, and contribute to well-functioning efforts to improve the working environment. The head of department must ensure that collaboration on health and safety is established, developed and maintained in order to provide the best framework for the occupational health and safety organisation to solve its tasks in the best way possible.

Among other things, the OHS committee is responsible for the physical working environment. The physical working environment is important for ensuring staff wellbeing at the workplace and can additionally contribute to a lower sickness absence rates and a good reputation. Furthermore, a good physical working environment increases safety at the workplace. In practice, the head of department often chairs the OHS committee. The OHS committee and the consultation committee may be merged.

2.3
STAFF PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS

Staff performance and development reviews must ensure a clear and meaningful relationship between the individual staff member, their area of expertise and the organisation as a whole. This occurs through continuous dialogue and focus on implementing staff members' development plans, but also through the annual staff performance and development review. The objective is to ensure a high level of staff wellbeing and commitment. The head of department is obligated to ensure that staff performance and development reviews are held with all staff members once a year.

It is rarely possible for the head of department to arrange for performance and development reviews with all staff members, particularly in large departments. Therefore, the head of department may delegate the reviews to someone else. When

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given responsibility for performance and development reviews, it ensures that reviews are conducted by a person with the necessary insight into the work done by the staff member concerned. Thus, in most cases, the most appropriate procedure is that research group leaders/academic group leaders conduct performance and development reviews with academic staff, and that administrative managers conduct performance and development reviews with technical/administrative staff. Subsequently, it is important that the head of department is informed of any challenges and needs for competence development.

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2.4
THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT'S INDIVIDUAL COMPETENCES

A head of department must be able to handle the cross pressure between managerial expectations and, for instance, staff members requesting maximum freedom for their own research. Therefore, a clearly defined managerial role, good organisational structures and inclusive decision-making processes are vital. The head of department's individual competences also play a major role. The good head of department will typically:

· Have a strong research and education background
· Be able to enter into constructive dialogue and collaboration with their surroundings
· Be a strong communicator
· Have diplomatic skills and be a good ambassador for AAU, the faculty and department
· Be able to manage conflicting expectations and demands
· Have the ability to delegate
· Be robust and flexible
· Be able to further develop their competences
· Have the courage to make difficult decisions
· Be empathetic and able to put themselves in other people's positions.

In addition, the good head of department will, as far as possible, be aware of:

· Having to be a role model for the other academic staff of the department
· Continuing the development of their own research, including publishing, obtaining external funding etc.
· Retaining a connection to the teaching.

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3.
The university's support of department management

The entire university has an interest in the head of department exercising good management. Therefore, the head of department is supported in their continuous development of management competences. This already begins when the individual accepts the position, and the head of department and the dean prepare a competence development plan in conjunction with AAU Competence Development. This plan considers both the individual and the organisational needs.

Management development is one of the university's strategic focus area, and AAU Competence Development has a particular focus on supporting the head of department and those to whom the head of department has delegated managerial competences. Besides a specific management course for heads of departments, a number of different management programmes are offered in conjunction with the Danish Centre for Leadership. Furthermore, a number of international management programmes are offered in conjunction with other universities.

To ensure that the head of department has the opportunity to develop in line with the university, management evaluations are carried out to give the head of department feedback from staff members, colleagues and dean.

In addition to the department's own administration, the administrative functions of Shared Services also support the management of the head of department, among other things with partners directly connected to the head of department.

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Finally, there are communities of several departments and across the faculties that meet in informal settings to discuss relevant topics to share knowledge and experiences on the joint challenges occurring in the department management.

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