



Guidelines for Project-oriented Study in an External Organisation (Voluntary Traineeship)

Background and purpose

At the Department of the Built Environment students on 3rd semester of the master's programme have the possibility to complete his/her project work in a company or a public or private institution - in Denmark or abroad, cf. the [Joint Programme Regulations](#). The project work will normally correspond to 30 ECTS equivalent to half a year's workload. During the traineeship the student must draw up a project report or a case-based project report.

The purpose of the traineeship is to provide the student with work experience in solving advanced engineering¹ tasks in a business context on a level corresponding to the study programme's 3rd semester. The traineeship must be of relevance for the master's programme in question.

The student will be allocated a technical coordinator or a semester coordinator at Aalborg University. After signing the agreement, the coordinator transfers the traineeship process and the supervision to an AAU project supervisor. Additionally, the external organisation will appoint an external supervisor with relevant professional background acting as supervisor and sparring partner.

Within the agreed professional framework for the project work, the external organisation and the student stipulate the conditions of the traineeship, i.e. work organisation etc.

Guidelines

At the Department of the Built Environment the following must apply to the traineeship:

- Approval of the traineeship must be based on the learning goals of the study programme. Provisions on the possibility of traineeships must be stipulated in the curriculum. The approval procedure must include provisions on the academic content in the external organisation, supervision, the reporting of the project work, and examination(s).

At the Department of the Built Environment the approval is granted by using the form *Agreement on Project-oriented Study in an External Organisation*. The student must *not* receive salary from the external organisation for the project work - regardless of whether the student receives SU (state education grant) or not². Further information about financial acknowledgement in the form of rent contributions, transportation etc. can be found [here](#).

During traineeships, the student is not automatically covered by the liability and accident insurance of the external organisation. Therefore, it must be stated in the agreement between the student and the external organisation whether the student is covered by the insurance of the external organisation or not. If the external organisation does not insure the student, the student should ensure that he/she is properly insured when performing the project work. The liability insurance is important in case the student causes damage while in the external organisation. It is a requirement that the project work does not endanger the student in any way. Furthermore, reference is made to the university's standard agreements – please visit [AAU Match](#) to find the relevant agreement.

¹ For MSc programmes: technical/academic

² According to [Uddannelsesbekendtgørelsen](#) (University Programme Order), when the project work is a standard part of the study programme, students must not receive salary from the external organisation for the project work. The study board must therefore not approve agreements where students receive salary from the external organisation.



[for Student Project](#). **Any other agreement** than the university's standard agreements must be approved by the chairman of the study board³ **before** the traineeship can start.

If no rules governing project work are laid down in the curriculum for the master's programme, the following guidelines apply:

If the student chooses to perform project work in an external organisation during the 3rd semester⁴

- the project work will normally correspond to a workload of 30 ECTS. No classes are usually taken during the 3rd semester.
- the traineeship will start around September 1st and end in late December/early January and is concluded by submitting a case-based project report or a project report in early January.
- an internal examination will be held in the end of January.
- the assessment is Pass/Fail⁵.

Responsibilities and process

The project work involves the student, the semester coordinator or technical coordinator, an AAU employed project supervisor, and an external supervisor from the host organisation. The project work must be approved by the study board before the traineeship can start.

Responsibilities of the student

Students are expected to establish contact with the external organisation themselves. However, this must not be done without prior agreement with the technical coordinator or semester coordinator. The student must ensure that the *Agreement on Project-oriented Study in an External Organisation* is completed. A section of the agreement must include a description of advanced engineering⁶ tasks and subjects. These must be on a level corresponding to the study programme's 3rd semester.

If the external organisation requests a non-disclosure or IPR (Intellectual Property Rights) agreement, please use the university's documents re. [Project Collaboration](#) or the university's documents re. [Student Internship](#). The document must be completed and signed prior to the traineeship.

The agreements must be approved and signed by the student, the AAU project supervisor, the external supervisor and the chairman of the study board. **Any other agreement** than the university's standard agreements must be approved by the chairman of the study board⁷ **before** the traineeship can start.

The student is responsible for maintaining regular contact with the external supervisor and the project supervisor. Both supervisors are expected to supervise equivalent to the time otherwise allocated for 3rd semester.

With regard to examination and submission of documentation for the traineeship two options exist:

1. Submission of a project report within the theme of the 3rd semester of the master's programme, if any, followed by an oral project exam.
2. Submission of a case-based project report followed by an ordinary project exam on the basis of the case-based project report.

If the latter option is selected, the procedure is as follows:

³ The chairman of the study board secures the signature of Grants & Contracts.

⁴ The student cannot apply for credit transfer of a bachelor of engineering internship.

⁵ If not otherwise stated in the curriculum.

⁶ For MSc programmes: technical/academic.

⁷ The chairman of the study board secures the signature of Grants & Contracts.



The student draws up a case-based project report according to the learning goals of the specialization. The case-based project report must be completed in accordance with the general guidelines for preparing project reports during previous semesters. The case-based project report must as a minimum include:

- An academic section:
 - a description of at least one of the academic issues which the student has addressed during the traineeship. The issue must be relevant to the student's study programme. If relevant, the description must include theories on problem analysis, methodology, models, possible solutions, implementation of tests, conclusion, etc. **This section must be on a level corresponding to the master's programme's 3rd semester and must describe advanced engineering⁸ tasks in practice. These tasks must be agreed upon before the start of the case-based project work, see *Agreement on Project-oriented Study in an External Organisation*.**
- A reflexive section:
 - a description of the external organisation, including structure and areas of work
 - an overview of the work areas in which the student has been involved
 - a report on the actual work performed by the student, an analysis of how the student has benefited from the traineeship - academically, professionally and socially
 - the student's experience with the traineeship, including any possible suggestions for changing the curriculum, procedures etc.
 - a reflection on the knowledge exchange between the external organisation and the study programme
 - an evaluation of the learning outcome of the traineeship.

The academic section must comprise the larger part of the report (at least 2/3 unless other regulations have been laid down by the study board).

The student distributes a copy of the project report or the case-based project report to the external organisation, except when other arrangements have been made.

Responsibilities of the AAU Project Supervisor

The AAU project supervisor is in continuous contact with the student and may visit the student during the traineeship. The AAU project supervisor acts as a supervisor for the student. The AAU project supervisor is responsible for examination and evaluation of the project work. The AAU project supervisor is assigned hours for supervision as if the student was performing a regular project, and the effort on the part of the AAU project supervisor shall therefore be the same.

Responsibilities of the External Supervisor

The external organisation appoints an external supervisor, who is also the student's immediate superior. This person must have a skill-set appropriate for the specific study programme. It is the responsibility of the external supervisor to secure that the project work is successful by ensuring that the student:

⁸ For MSc programmes: technical/academic



- is provided with work experience in solving advanced and relevant engineering⁹ tasks on a level corresponding to the study programme's 3rd semester and with a progression in the degree of difficulty of the tasks during the period. The type of work must allow for an academic report to be made.
- has the opportunity to get an overview of the work carried out in the external organisation and the industry in general.
- receives support and supervision. It is expected that the supervisor spends at least two hours per week on supervision. However, it should be noted that the student will receive supervision from the university as well. This means that the responsibility for helping the student is a shared responsibility.

In addition, the external supervisor shall co-sign the *Agreement on Project-oriented Study in an External Organisation*.

Evaluation of project work (voluntary traineeship)

The evaluation is oral and individual. The examination will be attended by the student, the AAU project supervisor (examiner), an internal examiner and, if possible, the external supervisor. However, the assessment will only be conducted by the examiner and the internal examiner.

The evaluation is based on an assessment of the project report or the case-based project report as well as the oral presentation and the subsequent discussion. The evaluation is an overall assessment of all elements of the examination, measured against the objectives of the curriculum.

The evaluation criteria are described in the [Joint Programme Regulations](#).

⁹ For MSc programmes: technical/academic