Terms of reference of Aarhus University’s Business Committee

Background
Aarhus University wants to be the preferred partner of the business community and the public sector. This goal is apparent from Aarhus University’s strategy 2013-2020, among other things occasioned by the fact that an increasing proportion of the university’s graduates find employment in the private sector. As one of several means to achieving this, the students must be offered more degree programme elements which bring them into direct contact with businesses and public institutions. Also, the university is keen to exploit the considerable potential that exists for establishing more research partnerships with private businesses. Such partnerships may centre on specific projects and more joint applications, cooperation on the use of the research infrastructure as well as talent development – including PhD and postdoc programmes.

The purpose of establishing a central business committee is to strengthen coordination, decision-making power and management support for the area.

Duties
The duties of the Business Committee include:

- Entering into strategic framework agreements with major enterprises, public institutions, municipalities, regions and business regions. Framework agreements may cover both educational and research partnerships and include all relevant subject areas. The framework agreements are supplemented with sub-agreements at relevant levels (faculty, department/school and research group).
- Following up on strategic framework agreements and action plans at least once a year.
- Exchanging knowledge with the faculties’ business committees on cooperation with external partners and ensuring knowledge sharing across the faculties.
- Strengthening the university’s profile as an attractive cooperation partner.
- Strengthening cooperation with SMEs.
Ensuring that the university’s research infrastructure and facilities enter into more cooperation with private enterprises than is the case today.

Working procedures
The work of the committee is based on the wishes and needs of students, staff and external partners.

The committee sets targets for its work, and prepares an annual action plan with regular follow-up. Secretarial services are provided by the Rector’s Office with the involvement of faculty secretariats and administrative divisions.

The Committee for Research and External Cooperation (UFFE) and the Education Committee (UFU) work in close cooperation with the Business Committee, among other things by contributing presentations, recommendations and proposals for activities. Vice-deans participate in meetings as required.

The rector, pro-rector and university director are responsible for implementing the initiatives decided across the university. In this work, they are supported by UFFE, UFU and the administration’s management team (LEA). Supported by their respective vice-deans, the deans are responsible for implementing the initiatives at the faculties, while the university director and LEA are responsible for implementing the initiatives in the administration.

The efforts and the organisation will be evaluated at the beginning of 2018 in connection with the follow-up on the action plan for 2017.

Composition
The committee is composed of the rector, the pro-rector, the university director and the four deans.

Meeting frequency
The committee meets at least once a month and as needed.

Adopted on 25 January 2017