HR policy
for Aarhus University

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INTRODUCTION

Aarhus University’s staff is its most important resource and the prerequisite for the university to fulfil its vision.

The object of the staff policy is to give all staff members – including managers – optimum conditions for solving university tasks efficiently and in an academically competent manner. The policy serves to establish a well-known and unambiguous framework for day-to-day work at the university to give staff and managers the best possible conditions for professional and personal development as well as job satisfaction. The staff policy also reflects the kind of workplace Aarhus University wants to be. The union representatives and cooperation committees play an important role in this regard and share the responsibility for a smooth implementation of the staff policy on a day-to-day basis.

Although the university is a self-governing institution, the administration must comply with the rules for human resource management as set out in the University Act. This means that the managerial rights regarding staff matters are pre-determined in some areas by the central team.

The staff policy applies to all staff members at Aarhus University. It consists of a framework policy supplemented by a number of sub-policies. These sub-policies contain the principles governing all aspects of working life. When the staff policy mentions the manager, this should be understood as the staff member’s immediate supervisor.

In a number of cases, the way in which parts of the staff policy are applied may differ according to whether or not the staff member in question is a permanent employee and whether the case involves academic staff or technical/administrative staff. In cases where different rules apply, this will be specifically mentioned in the individual sub-policy, or the policy will articulate the scenario or standard conditions on which the rules are based.

The staff policy and the sub-policies constitute the general framework agreement with which all local policies and agreements must comply. At a later stage, the staff policy will be supplemented by a staff manual containing more specific guidelines and rules.

The staff policy was adopted by the Main Liaison Committee on 18 January 2011.
AARHUS UNIVERSITY’S STAFF POLICY

Well-functioning governing bodies are a prerequisite for an effective staff policy. They permit the staff policy to contribute to general job satisfaction and help the university realise its vision of being an elite university that helps promote national and global welfare.

Norms for daily working life

Aarhus University wants all governing bodies to function in an orderly manner. It therefore insists that staff and managers (the immediate supervisors) should be in ongoing dialogue about collaboration and development. The university wants all staff members to:

1. respect the freedom of expression and the freedom of research
2. deal with each other in an appreciative and respectful manner characterised by propriety and openness regardless of the situation, function, organisational position or geographical location
3. contribute to a coherent and collaborative Aarhus University that thinks and acts as a unified university
4. regard differences and diversity among colleagues as a strength
5. handle conflicts of any nature in a proactive and professional manner
6. communicate openly, constructively and timely
7. respect the balance between private life and working life
8. accept that we all make mistakes, be able to acknowledge the mistakes and use them to learn and grow
9. develop and acknowledge professional staff management
10. ensure all employees have opportunities for personal and professional development

The norms for daily working life are reflected in the following specific aims and objectives:

Aarhus University would like:

1.1. Recruitment and employment
• to recruit academically competent staff who are professional, productive and committed to their work
• to ensure diversity among staff and to promote equality

1.2. Salary
• to use payroll funds in a strategic and targeted manner
• to ensure correlation between competences, performance and pay

1.3. Other role
• to strengthen the dialogue with society and contribute to innovation and renewal, including benefiting from the experience acquired through contact with society at large
but at the same time

- to prevent the competition with other companies and organisations from becoming distorted
- to prevent conflicts of interest and issues of legal capacity from arising between individual staff members and the university

1.4. The inclusive job market
- to prevent the loss of working capacity due to accidents, burnout and stress so that staff members, to the extent possible, maintain their full working capacity – including the necessary competences – throughout their working life
- to ensure that individuals with a reduced working capacity get an opportunity to use their competences and participate in working life at the university

2.1. Competence development
- to work systematically with competence development for all employees
- to ensure that the competence development of staff/managers supports the implementation of the university’s strategy and the need for development of individual staff members/managers
- to ensure that competence development gives the staff member a high market value both within and outside Aarhus University

2.2. Leave
- to examine specific options of granting leave to permanent employees if there are special academic reasons for the leave and it does not conflict with the interests of the university
- to promote staff mobility internally at the university by applying the opportunities for internal leave

2.3. Sick leave
- to prevent sick leave
- to ensure proactive, positive and rapid follow-up on the long-term sick leave of employees
- to ensure a flexible return to the university after long-term sick leave

2.4. Seniors
- to implement generational changes in an appropriate manner without causing loss of knowledge and competences in the organisation
- to utilise the special competences senior employees offer (experience and insight)

2.5. Situations of crisis
- to promote security, health and safety in the workplace
- to support employees in situations of crisis

2.6. Substance abuse
- to act on signs of abuse
- to help substance abusers quit their abuse

2.7. Harassment
- to act on signs of harassment
• to assist employees who have suffered harassment in the workplace
• to act in a consistent manner towards individuals guilty of harassing others

3.1. Retrenchment

*Retrenchment as a result of economic and/or structural/organisational conditions*

• to promote security in employment, to the extent possible, by means of a staff policy and long-term planning to avoid retrenchment as a result of economic and/or structural conditions
• to ensure that a retrenchment of staff, if unavoidable, is carried out in a transparent and factual manner without arbitrariness or discrimination
• to examine appropriate measures to prevent retrenchment as a result of economic and/or structural conditions before retrenchment takes place

*Dismissal on account of issues relating to the employee*

• to ensure that the dismissal of staff, if unavoidable, is carried out in a transparent and factual manner without arbitrariness or discrimination
• to ensure that managers act in a consistent and responsible manner in situations where an employee does not live up to management’s expectations in terms of either performance or behaviour

The management has the overall responsibility for implementing the staff policy, but everyone at Aarhus University is expected to act responsibly and contribute to the implementation of the staff policy.
1.1 Subpolicy on recruitment and employment

Workplace profile
It must be clear to applicants that Aarhus University is a workplace requiring high academic standards, productivity and professionalism. The university is also a workplace which values exciting development opportunities and human decency, and the university sees employee diversity as a strength. Aarhus University focuses on personal development and offers a flexible working day to promote a good work-life balance for its employees.

Applicants’ competencies
When recruiting, Aarhus University appreciates formal and proven professional competencies, talent and potential as well as personal competencies. Employees at Aarhus University have a personal responsibility for being competent within their fields at all times and must assume responsibility for the necessary development of their own competencies. The university must also motivate the individual employees to develop their own personal and professional competencies, and the university must make the necessary competency development resources available. Applicants must be able to act in a respectful and appreciative manner in their relations with others. They must be motivated and work professionally. Applicants should also be open to development and change and be able to collaborate with others in an appropriate manner.

Advertisement and employment
Pursuant to the rules laid down by the Danish Ministry of Finance, vacant technical and administrative positions must be filled following public advertising, unless the employment concerns a temporary position, holiday relief or other short-term employment not exceeding one year. At least one employee representative for the relevant unit participates during the entire employment procedure. When appointing academic staff, compliance is ensured with the job structure and appointment order applicable at all times, the first describing the individual types of academic positions and the latter containing provisions on advertisement and academic assessment committees for these positions. Add to this any locally agreed supplementary rules applying to these staff categories.

Upon permanent employment of academic staff at Aarhus University, the dean or a manager authorised by the dean may set up an appointment committee with up to three members. If an appointment committee is set up, the employees have the right to appoint a relevant employee representative for the committee. The appointment committee will not be set up until the academic evaluation has taken place, and the appointment committee has no authority in relation to the academic evaluation conducted, but merely has an advisory function in relation to the personal competencies of the relevant suitable candidates and their ability to cooperate with their colleagues in the workplace. It is a condition that the appointment committee is able to work quickly and flexibly to avoid unnecessary delay in the employment procedure.

New employees have the right to negotiate their pay. The pay negotiation must be completed before the letter of appointment is approved. The letter of appointment must be received by the employee well in advance of the employment, usually two weeks prior to the start of the employment. The employee must be informed of the name of his or her union representative.

Introduction
The manager and colleagues must plan a professional and targeted local introduction to the workplace and the job. The new employee must be offered advice and support to ensure that the employee quickly becomes familiar with the organisation and becomes able to function in the job within a short period of time. It should be noted that new foreign employees are expected in particular to need support and advice.

New employees must be offered to have a colleague as a fixed contact person in the first months of their employment, unless the employment concerns short-term or part-time positions. The contact person can answer questions of a general nature.

Aarhus University regularly arranges joint introduction sessions for new employees. The introduction includes basic knowledge of the university as a workplace, including organisation, culture, values and structure as well as rules, guidelines and policies applicable at the university. New employees must be offered the chance to participate in this Aarhus University introduction.

Manager’s special role and responsibility
The manager conducts an interview with the employee at the time when the new employee takes up his or her position. In the interview, the parties clarify their expectations in relation to the content of the work functions and the workplace culture and norms.

The manager appoints a contact person, see above, for the employee.

The manager is responsible for a local introduction programme and must contribute to the new employee gaining a sound knowledge of the university, including formal and informal rules, traditions and routines.

Employee’s special role and responsibility
Curiosity, openness, dialogue and commitment are expected of new employees in respect of their collaboration with colleagues and managers as well as in relation to new tasks. Compliance with the HR policy, which is available on the website, is assumed.

Employees should pay special attention to new colleagues and contribute to ensuring that the new employee gains a sound knowledge of the university, including formal and informal rules, traditions and routines.

Aarhus University wants to:
• Recruit academically competent employees who are professional, productive and personally committed to their jobs
• Create diversity in the staff and promote equality.
1.2 Subpolicy on pay

Pay negotiation criteria
Employees are paid in accordance with applicable collective agreements and other agreements. It is Aarhus University’s goal that all pay should be based on the responsibility and expertise required in a given position and on the requirements made for the education, expert knowledge, experience and personal competencies of the holder of the position. Pay is one of several ways of recognising an employee’s performance. A pay negotiation is based on the professional and personal competencies applied as well as on the development, performance, results, innovativeness and commitment in relation to the job and the workplace. The ability to support the goals set out in the university’s overall strategy as well as goals which are decided locally are also included.

Other ways of recognising an employee’s performance are promotion with a pay raise, special tasks and competency development. The employee performance interviews (MUS) are the ideal setting for bringing up these incentives.

Local guidelines
A way of promoting pay policy goals is to enter into agreements on local guidelines on negotiating supplements/one-time bonuses. Such local guidelines are agreed between the relevant level at the university and the various staff group organisations. The local guidelines should be deemed to be transparent and fair by both parties.

Use of payroll funds
The employees’ pay must develop in line with the individual employee’s professional and personal development. The base pay is supplemented by local supplements. Supplements may be granted as supplements for responsibilities and supplements for qualifications as well as recruitment supplements. Supplements may be permanent or temporary. In addition, one-time bonuses may be granted for extraordinary contributions.

New pay systems must be used in a strategic and proactive manner. Competencies contributing to Aarhus University being able to achieve its strategic goals have the highest priority in connection with the use of the payroll funds.

Pay negotiation
The nature and frequency of recurring pay negotiations as well as the resources required are set out in the individual written pay agreements concluded between Aarhus University and the recognised collective bargaining organisations. Employees have a right to pay negotiations once a year. Pay negotiations do not take place during employee performance interviews. Generally, the individual manager and the union representative negotiate the pay for the individual area. Managers and union representatives must be provided with the same pay information and other information (lists of employees) prior to the pay negotiations. Managers from the level of professor/special consultant/chief consultant and upwards may negotiate pay with their superiors themselves. The negotiation result is submitted to the recognised collective bargaining organisation for approval. If the negotiation result cannot be approved, the organisation may within seven days of the receipt of the negotiation result (unless a longer deadline has been agreed) demand that negotiations be opened with the management. If such a demand is not made before the expiry of the deadline, the negotiation result will be deemed to have been approved by the organisation.

The employee must be provided with factual and respectful grounds for being granted a supplement/one-time bonus as well as for a decision not to grant a supplement/one-time bonus.

Manager’s special role and responsibility
The manager must carry out an annual pay negotiation. The manager monitors the employee’s professional and personal performance, development, commitment and results. The manager must put these results into perspective in relation to the university’s strategic goals as expressed in the overall strategy as well as in relation to the local goals and expectations laid down by the individual manager and made visible to the employees. The ability to contribute to a workplace driven by professionalism, decency, development, cooperativeness and recognition is also taken into account.
The manager recognises formal as well as personal and applied competencies.

Employee’s special role and responsibility
The employee must be prepared to collaborate in respect of his or her pay requirements and should be aware of alternative types of reward besides pay. The employee must contribute with factual and honest information about his or her performance and work results and should view this in relation to the strategic goals set out and the locally defined goals and expectations, if any, see above under 'Manager’s role and responsibility'.

Aarhus University wants to:
• Use the payroll funds in a targeted and strategic manner
• Ensure coherence between competencies, performance and remuneration.
1.3 Subpolicy on other paid employment (sideline)

Definition of other paid employment (sideline):
Other paid employment is a work activity which is not anchored in the employee’s field of work in a broad sense. This may be:

- Employment with another public or private sector undertaking
- Own undertaking
- Membership of the board of executives and/or board of directors in commercial undertakings, NGOs or foundations
- Work on committees, commissions or in expert groups
- Extended teaching obligations at other institutions
- Advisory/consultation work.

Terms of other paid employment (sideline)
It is positive and desirable that employees take an interest in the social development and participate actively as good representatives of Aarhus University in the social development as well as render Aarhus University visible in the public debate as academic experts etc. on boards and committees. The university acknowledges the possibilities of gaining personal recognition as a popular researcher, expert and lecturer. Moreover, the university may also benefit from the experience acquired through employees’ contact with society in general.

The employees’ externally directed activities must, however, be compatible with the employees’ chief occupation at the university. No private competitive advantages or private gain may be obtained as a result of research funded by Aarhus University, and employees may not thanks to the combination of their employment with Aarhus University and their other paid employment contribute to distorting competition in relation to other undertakings etc. Finally, no conflicts of interest and competence problems may arise between the employee and the university.

Prior to an employee taking on planned other paid employment, including obtaining significant financial interests in another undertaking, the head of department and the corresponding management level must be informed thereof in writing.

Other paid employment for employees at Aarhus University is permitted unless:

- The other paid employment entails that the employee is unable to perform his or her duties at the university concurrently with attending to other paid employment duties (performance and availability);
- The other paid employment is in competition with the university’s activities;
- Competence problems arise as a consequence of the other paid employment;
- The other paid employment is incompatible with the respect and trust which is required in order to be employed with the university; or
- The other paid employment is in conflict with internal rules and instructions.

Manager’s special role and responsibility
The manager informs the employee about the policy applying to other paid employment at the university.

The manager must ask the employee to discontinue the other paid employment if such employment is in conflict with the rules.

Employee’s special role and responsibility
The employee must soberly assess his or her other paid employment in relation to the principles for other paid employment permitted by the university and has a duty to inform his or her manager of the other paid employment.

The employee must be open to participating in the communication of research findings to the outside world as part of his or her employment with the university. If the employee is uncertain as to whether the other paid employment falls outside the scope of what is permitted by the university, the employee should seek advice and approval from his or her manager.
If the employee is requested by his or manager to discontinue other paid employment, the employee must discontinue such other paid employment without undue delay.

Aarhus University wants to:
- Strengthen the dialogue with the surrounding society and contribute to innovation and renewal, including benefiting from the experience acquired through contact with society in general;

but also
- Prevent distortion of competition in relation to other undertakings and organisations;
- Prevent conflicts of interest and competence problems between the employee and the university.
1.4 Subpolicy on the inclusive labour market

Retention
As a responsible workplace, Aarhus University will seek to retain employees who are at risk of being dismissed due to illness or reduced capacity for work. Naturally, this presupposes that retention is a realistic solution in relation to the capacity for work and potential work tasks. The HR policy with related subpolicies and the staff handbook are the primary tools for retaining employees who become ill, disabled or otherwise lose part of their capacity for work. This includes procedures for sickness interviews, relaxation of the performance requirements for a period of time, transfer, absence policy, offers of advice, guidance and treatment. Retention may also take place through social partnership agreements, use of the social chapters in the collective agreements, flexi jobs, light jobs, retraining and senior policy. Flexi jobs can be used when an employee has permanently lost his or her full capacity for work. The flexi job employment is discussed with the relevant union representative. The management discusses the employment with the employees who are to work with the person in question on a daily basis in order to ensure that the employees have a positive attitude towards contributing to realising the purpose of the employment. Light jobs are used when an employee has been granted early retirement and is unable to work on normal terms.

Recruitment
The university wants to be a diverse workplace, which also appears from the university's subpolicy on recruitment and employment. The university is open and willing to employ and integrate persons supported through job training, flexi jobs, light jobs, revalidation, work trials or through use of the social chapters in the collective agreements.

Manager's special role and responsibility
The manager takes action if there is a prospect that an employee will no longer be able to perform his or her ordinary job. A transition to employment on special terms may only take place according to agreement with the employee. The manager's possibilities of solving the problems depend on the employee's situation, including the future capacity for work and the options available at the workplace. The manager explores every avenue. The manager must be open and willing to employ persons supported through job training etc.

Employee's special role and responsibility
The employee must inform his or her manager as soon as possible if there is a prospect that the employee will no longer be able to perform his or her ordinary job. The employee must demonstrate flexibility and the will to adapt to the options which the university can offer the employee. Colleagues of an employee who is employed on special terms must contribute positively to integrating the employee in the workplace, both academically, socially and in terms of collegial collaboration.

Aarhus University wants to:
• Prevent the loss of capacity for work through accidents, wearing-down and burn-out or stress, and thus ensure that employees as far as possible maintain their full capacity for work throughout their working lives
• Ensure that persons with reduced capacity for work are offered the chance to use their competencies and participate in the working life at the university.
2.1 Subpolicy on competency development

The university maintains and further develops the employees' competencies to safeguard their ability to handle new and existing tasks going forward. Competency development of both employees and managers forms a natural part of the planning in every section/unit.

Employee performance interviews (MUS)

Annual employee performance interviews are conducted. The employee performance interview is a dialogue between the manager and the employee at which agreements on relevant competency development, among other things, are made. The appraisal must take into account the need to bolster the organisation's competencies as well as the individual employee's competencies, with a view to supporting Aarhus University's strategy. The employee performance interviews must result in a written agreement for the employees, setting out specific targets for work assignments and competency development in the short as well as the long term.

Competency development methods

Participation in internal and external continuing education and training courses (various types of education and training, including e-learning) is recognised as a traditional competency development method. Other methods include:

- Job swaps, rotation systems and secondment
- Mentoring, work shadowing and neighbour training
- Learning environment (includes, for example, how to organise tasks into projects or teams, how to share knowledge, provide feedback and use coaching)
- Conferences, seminars etc.

Manager’s special role and responsibility

The manager earmarks funds for the competency development of the unit's employees. Once a year, the manager conducts employee performance interviews, which may be supplemented by a group performance interview (GRUS), with a view to clarifying expectations and discussing issues related to competency development etc. At the employee performance interview, the manager must set and follow up on specific development goals for the individual employee, which the manager and employee agree on and formulate. The manager ensures that the employee has the time necessary to develop his or her competencies.

Employee’s special role and responsibility

The employee is personally responsible for being competent at performing his or her tasks at any time and must therefore assume responsibility for the development of his or her own competencies and live up to agreements made on competency development. The employee must contribute to knowledge sharing with colleagues after having participated in continuing education and training activities.

Aarhus University wants to:

- Work systematically on competency development for all employees
- Ensure that the competency development of employees/managers underpins the realisation of the university’s strategy and the individual development needs of the individual employees/managers
- Make sure that the competency development guarantees the employee good opportunities in the labour market, both in and outside the university.
2.2 Subpolicy on leave

A leave of absence means that an employee is excused from all or some of his or her duties at the university for a specific period of time, with the right and the obligation to return to a position within the area of employment after the end of such period. As a general rule, leaves of absence are granted without pay. In order for the university to grant leave with pay, the employee must be legally entitled to such leave.

Generally, employees have no legal entitlement to a leave of absence, but the university may grant an employee leave upon application. In certain circumstances, however, the employee has a legal entitlement to a leave of absence, e.g. in connection with maternity/paternity leave, compassionate leave, service abroad, with international organisations, with the Greenland home rule authorities etc. In very rare circumstances, the employee is ordered to take leave – e.g. the mother in the first two weeks after giving birth.

Types of leave
A distinction is made between the following types of leave:

- External leave (for full-time professional competency development, sabbaticals etc. or for taking on a job which the employee has applied for outside Aarhus University)
- Internal leave (for taking on a job which the employee has applied for inside Aarhus University)
- Job rotation (agreement between two units at Aarhus University where, for example, two employees swap jobs for a period of time or where an employee works in another organisational unit for a period of time).

Delimitation between a leave of absence and secondment/being excused from teaching duties

In terms of secondment and being excused from teaching duties, the most important difference in relation to a leave of absence is the fact that the employee on leave is not counted as one of the employees in the unit when the job assignments are distributed among the staff. In case of a leave of absence, the remaining employees are thus required to shoulder an extra burden because, as an overriding rule, it should not be expected that approval for employment of a substitute will be granted.

Another difference between leave and secondment is the fact that a leave of absence is normally mainly in the interests of the employee while secondment is normally mainly in the interests of the university.

Leave criteria

Leaves of absence – apart from leave to which there is a legal entitlement – are only granted to permanent employees and must be granted on academic grounds.

The possibility of granting a leave of absence depends on an assessment carried out by the head of department or by a manager at a corresponding management level. The assessment constitutes an overall assessment of the employee’s employment at Aarhus University, the purpose of the leave, the duration of the requested leave as well as the general situation in the organisational unit.

A leave of absence must not be in conflict with the university's interests. Leaves of absence are normally granted for a maximum of one year at a time. Following renewed application, the period of leave may be extended if the manager deems this reasonable and desirable in relation to the employee's job function and the purpose of the leave. The decision must be objective. In this context, the working methods of academic staff will typically give rise to a need for professionally-based leave in more and combined longer periods than other employees. Job rotation normally has a duration of three months.

Maternity/paternity leave

Maternity/paternity leave consists of both a legal and an agreement-based part. As concerns the agreement-based part, the manager considering the request for leave must demonstrate flexibility to ensure that employees with young children can strike a balance between working life and family life. Taking maternity/paternity and parental leave has no negative impact on future career opportunities at Aarhus University. For academic employees, this means, among other things, that the academic assessment of suitability must include publication effectiveness and not just publication quantity.

Job return
When a leave of absence is granted, a promise that the employee can return to the position from which he or she is being granted leave is made at the same time. In connection with technical and administrative positions, leaves of absence are granted with the right to return to a position within the broader technical and administrative area rather than to a specific position within the technical and administrative area. This applies in cases of unpaid leave which is not regulated by any rules of law, e.g. leave for taking on another position, sabbaticals etc.

In connection with job rotation, technical and administrative employees have the right to be promised a return to the position from which he or she is granted leave if the job rotation has a duration of a maximum of three months. If a job rotation with a duration of more than three months is granted, technical and administrative employees have the right to return to a position within the broader technical and administrative area.

Manager’s special role and responsibility
The manager objectively assesses whether the request for leave can be met and, in this context, carefully checks that the leave is not in conflict with the university’s interests – unless there is a legal entitlement to the leave, e.g. maternity/paternity leave. It may be in conflict with the university’s interests if the leave of absence is from a function which must be continued, but which cannot be handled by a substitute or colleagues. The manager must also assess whether granting leave will make the unit unacceptably vulnerable.

Employee’s special role and responsibility
To facilitate the manager’s planning, the employee must contact the manager as soon as possible when he or she wants to apply for a leave of absence. In cases where there are rules on deadlines for application, these must be observed. No later than one month before the expiry of the leave period, the employee must inform the manager whether he or she wants to return to his or her position at the university.

Aarhus University wants to:
- Look into the specific possibility of granting leaves of absence to permanent employees if there are special professional grounds for the leave and if the leave is not in conflict with the university’s interests
- Boost employee mobility internally at the university by utilising the possibilities of internal leave.
2.3 Subpolicy on sickness absence

Focus on sickness absence
Aarhus University wants to prevent sickness absence to the widest possible extent, and thus ensure efficient overall performance, through flexible work planning, competency development, co-involvement, openness and investment in good HR management.

Anyone may suffer short-term illness or may fall seriously ill for a long period of time. Aarhus University has a special focus on frequent instances of short-term illness or long-term illness, partially to ensure the employee's work-related health and well-being and partially to contribute, to the widest possible extent, to ensuring the retention of the employee and his or her return to the job. An important means towards this end is maintaining good and ongoing communication with the sick employee in the form of interviews. The employee has the right to have a union representative or observer present during these interviews.

Employees who fall ill must report this to their place of work on the first day of sickness at the beginning of the working day.

When returning to work after a sickness absence period, the absence must be registered in the local absence registration system and approved by the manager.

Certificate of fitness to work
The former medical certificate on unfitness for work (Lægeerklæring om uarbejdsdygtighed) has been replaced by a so-called 'certificate of fitness to work' (Mulighedserklæring) with focusses on the employee maintaining contact with the workplace.

The university may demand that a certificate of fitness to work be prepared in connection with both frequent short-term and long-term sickness absence.

The certificate of fitness to work is used if there is uncertainty in the dialogue between the university and the employee as to which work functions the employee is able to handle.

If the university wants a certificate of fitness to work, it may be discussed at the four-week interview what the certificate should include.

The certificate clarifies, among other things, the employee's possibilities of resuming work and the time when the employee will be able to return to the university, including the possibilities of gradually returning to the employee's former or adapted tasks.

The university bears the cost of having a doctor prepare the certificate of fitness to work.

Short-term illness
When an employee has more than ten individual days of absence or more than four short absence periods due to sickness within a year, the immediate superior invites the employee to an interview. The purpose of the interview is to protect the health and well-being of the employee, including assessing possible work environment-related illness.

Long-term illness
In connection with an expected sickness absence lasting longer than 21 consecutive days, a sickness absence interview is held before the end of the fourth week counted from the first day of absence. Before the end of the eighth week counted from the first day of absence, a retention interview is held. The purpose of the interviews – apart from protecting the health and well-being of the employee – is a dialogue about the employee's possibilities of returning to the job within a short period of time and the possibility of retaining the employee in the workplace.

Follow-up interviews are held at suitable intervals.

Work-related/not work-related
If employees regularly have a deviating high sickness absence, the manager must closely analyse the reasons, including whether there are work-related causes: working relations, workloads, hazardous substances in the surroundings, psychological work environment etc. If this is the case, the manager must immediately follow up by taking relevant action. In addition, the causes must be discussed in the liaison committee and the occupational health and safety committee. An action plan must be prepared to address the special circumstances at the workplace which may be at the root of a high sickness absence rate among one or more employees.

Manager's special role/responsibility
The manager is responsible for ensuring a healthy work environment at the workplace. The individual manager exercises his or her responsibility for the work on preventing sickness absence through daily HR management, including focus on possible signs of failure to thrive or a poor work environment. The manager is responsible for inviting the employee to a sickness absence interview and for ensuring that the interview takes place as a respectful, open and constructive dialogue with respect for the employee’s privacy and for the potentially vulnerable position of the employee. When inviting the employee to the interview, the manager must also inform the relevant union representative thereof. The individual manager has the main responsibility for a positive and specific action plan being prepared in conclusion to a sickness absence interview, and for ensuring that the action plan is implemented and followed up on. The manager sees to it that a certificate of fitness to work is prepared.

The manager is responsible for preparing a retention plan, unless there is no realistic chance of the employee returning to the workplace.

Employee’s special role/responsibility

Through his or her conduct on a daily basis, the employee contributes to ensuring a workplace with a healthy work environment and the avoidance of work-related illness.

The employee must participate constructively and openly in the sickness absence interview as concerns the connection between the sickness absence and working conditions. The same applies to the preparation of the certificate of fitness to work. Finally, the individual employee must participate actively and constructively in the preparation and implementation of the action plan.

Aarhus University wants to:

- Prevent sickness absence
- Ensure proactive, positive and quick follow-up in relation to employees with long-term sickness absence
- Ensure a flexible return to the university after long-term sickness absence.
2.4 Subpolicy on senior employees

Competencies
The university endeavours to ensure the optimum connection between personal resources and tasks. Age is not crucial, but rather competencies, conduct, motivation, willingness to develop and capacity for work.
All employees – including senior employees – have an obligation to maintain their academic and personal competencies on an ongoing basis.

Generational change
The university wants to make the necessary room for talent development without the organisation losing knowledge. Systematic HR planning must therefore be carried out at the individual workplace at the university to ensure that no gaps occur between new recruitment and termination of employment or retirement and that focus is on the need to maintain knowledge and transfer knowledge. A reconciliation of expectations with senior employees, e.g. through interviews concerning seniority, forms part of this process.

Interview concerning seniority
In connection with the staff development interview (MUS), senior employees, including senior managers, must be offered an interview concerning seniority. The point at which an interview concerning seniority is required varies from one person to the next. The interview is an offer to employees 55+ years. The interview must focus on whether the individual employee’s work and working conditions should change as the employee gets older.
The purpose of the interview is retention. The focus in the interview should be on 'development'. Due to planning considerations, the interview touches on possible plans for the time of retirement, e.g. in the form of voluntary retirement, but issues such as reduced working hours and lowering of position status are also discussed during the interview.

An interview concerning seniority contains a dialogue on:

- Present and future tasks
- Development and motivation
- Development needs and development wishes
- Flexibility in the work planning
- Generational change programmes.

The interview concerning seniority takes place between the individual senior employee and his or her personnel manager as well as the union representative if requested by the employee. The manager possesses the specific knowledge about the possibilities of adjusting tasks and areas of responsibility etc.

Senior schemes and other individual agreements
Senior schemes on reduction of working hours, reduction of job responsibilities (retreat), paid time off and retention bonus and voluntary retirement.
Agreement may also be reached on changed job functions, changed tasks, consultancy schemes and specialisation, part-time employment, partial pension, early retirement etc. Such agreements must be approved by the relevant employee's trade union.

Emeritus schemes
A so-called emeritus scheme may be agreed on in relation to academic employees who have elected retirement themselves – if there is mutual interest in such an agreement. According to individual agreement with the manager, office facilities may be placed at the employee's disposal, a lower number of teaching hours offered etc.

Mentoring
Senior employees must contribute to a smooth generational change by participating in mentor schemes with employees from the talent pool upon agreement with the manager. The schemes are to ensure knowledge sharing and mutual inspiration/innovative thinking among talents and mentors.

Manager’s special role and responsibility
The manager carries out long-term HR planning to ensure a smooth generational change without a loss of knowledge and competencies in the organisation. The manager discusses plans for the future with senior employees in good time, including offering a targeted interview concerning seniority. A long-term plan for the last active years in the labour market are agreed during the interview concerning seniority. The plan must take into account the employee’s health and life situation as well as ensure a dignified and respectful treatment of elderly employees during the last years of their active working lives.

Employee’s special role and responsibility
The employee contributes with his or her competencies and experience and motivation. The employee contributes to maintaining his or her own competencies and personal development irrespective of age until the termination of the employment/retirement. The employee passes on his or her knowledge to the organisation, e.g. in the form of training of other employees, mentoring and/or writing down personal and professional knowledge.

Aarhus University wants to:
- Ensure that the generational change takes place in an appropriate manner without loss of knowledge and competencies in the organisation
- Benefit from the special competencies which elderly employees may contribute (experience and insight).
2.5 Subpolicy on crisis situations

Work environment
The university looks after the individual employee as well as the joint work environment. Through flexible work planning, competency development, co-involvement, openness and investment in good HR management, Aarhus University wants to contribute to ensuring a good work environment. Moreover, the university’s managers are obliged to carry out continuous follow-up on workplace assessments.

If an employee experiences a personal crisis (e.g. divorce, stress-related illness, a death, accident etc.) which may have an impact on his or her performance, managers and colleagues must act professionally and respectfully when assisting their colleague. Correspondingly, it is assumed that employees in crisis collaborate towards resolving their work situation in an expedient manner.

Employees in crisis must be offered help and support
Work-related crises and personal crises may occur unexpectedly and suddenly (emergency crisis counselling). Crises concern the workplace if they affect the employees’ well-being and functional capacity at work, including having an unfortunate effect on the relationship with colleagues or a negative impact on the university’s reputation.

In connection with such crises, the manager must take action as soon as there is cause for concern, through a personal interview with the relevant employee. The manager must help the relevant employee get over the crisis with relevant and possible tools such as temporarily excusing the employee from some tasks, referral for psychological counselling or similar. The agreed steps are written down in an action plan. When preparing the action plan, it should be kept in mind that it concerns a vulnerable and sensitive situation.

Openness
Early intervention in relation to personal crises requires openness on the part of both employees and managers.
Concerns should not be kept from a colleague, and contributing to rumour-mongering is unacceptable. It is considered good conduct at Aarhus University to act on well-founded concerns, both through dialogue with the colleague in question and by alerting the manager to the situation. It is also possible to contact the union representative.

Openness is achieved, among other things, by:

- The local workplace ensuring a work environment characterised by openness and appreciation which makes the employee feel comfortable with being open about any problems, both in relation to the manager and in relation to colleagues
- Employees not keeping concerns about colleagues to themselves, but bringing them up with the colleague and/or manager
- The local management handling concerns and problems in a professional and respectful manner based on an appreciative approach.

Manager’s special role and responsibility
In connection with personal and work-related crises with an impact on the workplace, the manager must show the necessary consideration for the employee as well as ensuring that the day-to-day work tasks are solved.

If the employee requests an interview, the manager participates in a positive spirit. The manager takes the initiative for an interview if the manager senses that an employee is in a crisis which affects his or her working life.

If the employee refuses to cooperate on an action plan, the manager may make such action plan a condition for further dialogue on the employee’s affiliation with the workplace.

Employee’s special role and responsibility
If an employee experiences a psychological crisis which affects the his or her performance and/or behaviour towards colleagues, the employee may request an interview with the manager in which the union representative and/or other relevant person may participate upon the employee’s request.
If the manager invites the employee to an interview on his or her own initiative, the employee must participate in a positive spirit. An interview must result in an action plan which the employee contributes to preparing and complying with in a positive manner. Colleagues share responsibility for helping the employee to a good return to his or her working life.

Aarhus University wants to:
• Contribute to security, health and safety in the workplace
• Support employees in crisis.
2.6 Subpolicy on abuse

Prevention
Through flexible work planning, competency development, co-involvement, openness and investment in good HR management, Aarhus University wants to contribute to ensuring a high level of employee satisfaction to avoid abuse to the widest possible extent.

Abuse is unacceptable
Addictions concern the workplace if they affect the employees' well-being and functional capacity at work, including having an unfortunate effect on the relationship with colleagues or damaging the university's reputation.

Having an addiction (to, for example, alcohol and/or drugs) and being under the influence in the workplace is incompatible with working at the university. An employee who is visibly under the influence will be sent home immediately and invited to a personal interview without undue delay.

Managers at the university must actively take action and follow up if an employee forms an addiction (alcohol, drugs, medicine, gambling etc.).

Employees with addictions must be offered help and support
The manager must take action as soon as there is cause for concern, through a personal interview with the relevant employee, and must act with a view to helping the employee overcome his or her addiction. The manager acts in a respectful manner in the communication. Respectful conduct also means requiring that the employee cooperates on an action plan in order to overcome his or her addiction.

The employee's cooperation in the preparation of and compliance with the action plan may be made a condition for continued employment at the university.

The manager and colleagues must be open towards the relevant employee as regards well-founded concerns about the employee's well-being and must jointly ensure help and individual support for the employee with the addiction.

Addictions must be countered through early intervention
It is unacceptable behaviour if you keep concerns from a colleague and contribute to rumour-mongering. The manager and colleagues are obliged to act on well-founded concerns, both through dialogue with the colleague in question and by alerting the manager to the situation. It is also possible to contact the union representative.

Early intervention in relation to abuse requires openness on the part of both employees and managers.

Openness is achieved, among other things, by:

- Regularly discussing the university's abuse policy – including the meaning of the policy in a local context
- The local workplace ensuring a work environment characterised by openness and appreciation which makes the employee feel comfortable with being open about any problems, both in relation to the manager and colleagues
- Employees not keeping concerns about colleagues to themselves, but bringing them up with the colleague and/or manager
- The local management handling concerns and problems in a professional, appreciative and respectful manner.

Manager's special role and responsibility
The manager is proactive and takes the initiative in respect of potential and actual addictions. The manager offers help and guidance and provides the necessary references for help from other units, e.g. through the Occupational Health and Safety Unit.

The manager acts in an appreciative and respectful manner towards an employee who draws attention to his or her own addiction or employees who express well-founded concerns about a colleague.

Addictions are handled through direct dialogue with the addict. The manager requires that the addict must make an effort to solve the problem through an action plan, including requiring that the employee must accept treatment offers.
Employee’s special role and responsibility
Employees with an addiction have a responsibility for overcoming the addiction and must contribute to solving the problem. The employee must cooperate on finding the optimum solution in relation to the given situation.
When it is found that an employee has an addiction, the employee with the addiction must participate in a dialogue on this. The dialogue must clarify the scope of the problem and the need for treatment. The addict must contribute to preparing an action plan on which follow-up is carried out. If the addict fails to comply with the action plan, this may have consequences for the employment; initially as a warning and possibly later in the form of dismissal.

Aarhus University wants to:
• Take action on abuse signals
• Support an addict in overcoming the addiction.
2.7 Subpolicy on bullying

Prevention

Bullying at the university is unacceptable. Managers prevent bullying from arising through active and clear HR management. The manager intervenes quickly and consistently in case of bullying. Managers who manage other managers prevent that managers engage in bullying behaviour.

Bullying

Bullying often takes the form of gossip, slander or offensive/degrading communication to or about the person in question. Bullying is when one or more persons regularly and over an extended period of time – or repeatedly in a rude manner – subject one or more persons to offensive acts which the person perceives as degrading. Offensive acts turn into bullying at the time when you are unable to defend yourself effectively against the offensive acts.

Bullying consists of offensive acts – acts of bullying. This includes both active actions and omitting to act in certain situations. Bullying can, for example, be in the form of the following actions:

- Withholding necessary information
- Offensive remarks
- Non-objective release from or reduction of responsibilities and duties
- Slander or exclusion from the social and academic community
- Attacks on the victim or criticism of his or her private life
- Dressing-down and ridicule
- Physical assault or threats of physical assault
- Hostility or silence in response to questions or attempts at conversation
- Denigration of the victim’s job, his or her performance or competencies
- Offensive phone calls
- Offensive written messages
- Unpleasant teasing
- Demeaning or patronising behaviour, e.g. due to age or gender
- Exploitation of the job, e.g. for private errands.

Typical acts of bullying in connection with sexual harassment include:

- Unwanted touching
- Unwanted verbal sexual propositions about intercourse
- Lewd jokes
- Inappropriate queries about sexual topics.

What is accepted as normal behaviour among colleagues in one part of the organisation may be considered bullying in another part of the organisation. It is therefore important to consider the employee's perception of the acts to which the employee is subjected.

Help victims of bullying

Victims of bullying are offered expert help to re-establish their well-being in the workplace. The help is acquired through the manager and the Occupational Health and Safety Unit. If necessary, this may include the possibility of a new place of work at the university.

Consequences for bullies

Employees who bully are invited to a personal interview. If the bullying does not stop immediately thereafter, it will have consequences for the employment.

Manager’s special role and responsibility

The manager intervenes to prevent bullying immediately when the manager comes to suspect bullying.

The manager looks after the victim through a personal interview and possibly by procuring expert help for follow-up. The manager follows up consistently vis-à-vis employees who bully.

Employee’s special role and responsibility
If employees suspect or know that a colleague is being bullied, they must inform the manager of their suspicion or knowledge. Employees who experience bullying must contact their manager or union representative, occupational health and safety representative or liaison committee representative. The bullying victim/aggrieved party has an obligation to inform the bully/violator, possibly via the manager, union representative or liaison committee representative, that his or her behaviour is perceived as hurtful, offensive. Colleagues must cooperate with the management to solve the problems in the workplace in order to ensure the re-establishment of a bullying victim’s well-being in the workplace.

Aarhus University wants to:

- Take action on signs of bullying
- Help employees who have been exposed to workplace bullying
- Be consistent in relation to people who bully.
3.1 Subpolicy on compulsory redundancy

Dismissal based on financial or structural/organisational grounds

In connection with dismissal based on financial or structural/organisational grounds, every avenue towards avoiding compulsory redundancy is explored in advance, including, for example, the possibilities of relocation, initially within the main academic area and subsequently university-wide. The possibility of avoiding dismissals by launching targeted competency development which is not of an unreasonable scope or which is not unreasonably costly is also investigated. Furthermore, it must be possible to acquire the necessary competencies within a short period of time. Any dismissal of employees enjoying shop steward protection must be approved by the rector before taking steps to dismiss such employees. Expected dismissals based on financial or structural/organisational grounds are discussed in the Main Liaison Committee and local liaison committees. HR and subsequently the union representative are involved before steps to dismiss are taken. In addition, liaison committees and union representatives are involved in the process in accordance with the applicable rules. The special rules set out in the Danish Act on Notice etc. (Lov om varsling mv.) apply to compulsory redundancy. These rules place a duty on the manager/managers to negotiate with the staff and to submit notice of the dismissals to the regional labour market councils within a given deadline. The information about the planned dismissal is given to the employee personally in an interview with the manager, unless the union representative on behalf of the employee expresses a wish for a different communication form. The employee must be offered to have an observer present at the handing over of the declaration of intent with the intent to dismiss letter. If the dismissal concerns more than one employee, the planned dismissals must be communicated immediately after each other without undue delay. Dismissed employees are offered an outplacement process and the possibility of relevant competency development during their notice period.

Dismissal based on the individual employee’s situation

Aarhus University wants to:

- Ensure that the dismissal of employees, when unavoidable, takes place on a transparent and objective basis without arbitrariness and discrimination
- Act in a managerially consistent and responsible manner in relation to the work situations in which an employee does not fulfil the management’s requirements and expectations from an academic or behavioural perspective.

In connection with compulsory redundancy on grounds of the individual employee’s situation, the liaison committee need not be involved, but the manager is responsible for involving the relevant union representative in accordance with the applicable rules in the area. In cases involving dismissal due to sickness, the manager must investigate the possibility of offering employment on special terms, e.g. a flexi job (see also the subpolicy on the inclusive labour market). The manager discusses the possibility of a flexi job position with the relevant union representative. The manager determines whether the employee should be released from his or her duties during the notice period.

Manager’s special role and responsibility

The manager must act proactively in relation to employees who are heading towards a situation in which compulsory redundancy may be a possibility, e.g. in connection with an outdated competency profile, lack of motivation and performance on the part of the employee. Well ahead of planned dismissals, the manager plans a professional process based on decency. The process must take into account the timely involvement of relevant persons/organisations, union representatives and liaison committees. The manager must furthermore look into relevant preventive measures before a decision on dismissal is made.

Employee’s special role and responsibility
The employee must be ready to change and willing to take on new duties in other places in the organisation if this opportunity arises as a preventive measure. Following dismissal, the employee is still bound by any duty of confidentiality. This is the same duty of confidentiality to which the employee was subject during his or her employment with Aarhus University.

Aarhus University wants to:

- Create, to the greatest possible extent, a framework for job security through HR policy and long-term planning, such that endeavours are made to avoid compulsory redundancy on financial and structural grounds
- Ensure that the dismissal of employees, when unavoidable, takes place on a transparent and objective basis without arbitrariness and discrimination
- Look into appropriate preventive measures to avoid dismissal on financial or structural grounds before a decision on dismissal is made.