

## The Aarhus University By-laws

Laid down in accordance with section 13 of the Danish Act on Universities (the University Act), cf. Consolidation Act no. 391 of 10 April 2024 with subsequent amendments

### Part 1

#### *Status, tasks, foundation and goals*

##### *Status*

**Section 1.-(1)** Aarhus University is a state-funded, self-governing institution under public sector administration.

*Subsection (2)* The City of Aarhus, Denmark, is the university's domicile and venue. The university's by-laws are approved by the Danish Agency for Higher Education and Science on the authority of the minister for higher education and science.

##### *Tasks*

**Section 2.-(1)** Aarhus University is responsible for conducting research and offering world-class research-based education and research-based consultancy services to public sector authorities, disseminating knowledge of scientific and scholarly methodologies and results, and exchanging knowledge and competencies with society at large.

##### *Foundation*

**Section 3.-(1)** Aarhus University rests on the working partnership between academic disciplines that is characteristic of universities within the European university tradition with a full range of university subjects and research areas.

*Subsection (2)* Aarhus University bases its activities on the principles expressed in the 1988 Magna Charta of the European Universities, including independence, freedom of research, teaching and education, the mutual exchange of knowledge, cultural collaboration, and research-based teaching.

*Subsection (3)* Aarhus University respects research ethics, including the requirement of incorruptibility and reliability, openness to criticism and the repeated testing of research achievements and results.

*Subsection (4)* Aarhus University was founded in 1928 under the name 'Universitetsundervisningen i Jylland' (University Teaching in Jutland) and, by virtue of the history of its establishment, has an obligation to contribute to the development of the region and the local community.

##### *Goals*

**Section 4.-(1)** Aarhus University's activities must have a high academic standard, whether this is measured by national or international standards. Aarhus University's graduates must be characterised by quality and employability in Denmark and abroad, and the university's research must make its mark in international academic debate and in international research cooperation in general.

*Subsection (2)* Aarhus University will develop science and scholarship and contribute critically to increased knowledge, unbound by prevailing academic and societal preconceptions. For its researchers, Aarhus University will therefore create conditions that promote creativity and a critical attitude towards preconceptions and viewpoints which, in both research and in the rest of society, are accepted as established truths.



*Subsection (3)* Through its research and degree programmes, Aarhus University will help to promote development, growth and prosperity. Aarhus University will therefore seek to ensure that its degree programmes, research and exchange of knowledge with other areas of society contribute significantly to society's development.

*Subsection (4)* Aarhus University will be a significant cultural factor in a broader societal context. Through education, research and cooperation, Aarhus University will therefore promote the vibrancy and diversity of cultural life.

## **Part 2**

### ***Organisation***

#### ***The board, the rector and the senior management team***

**Section 5.-(1)** The board is the supreme authority of the university.

*Subsection (2)* The rector is responsible for the day-to-day management of the university within the framework set by the board.

*Subsection (3)* The rector, the pro-rector(s), the university director, the deans and the director of Enterprise and Innovation together constitute the senior management team, which, under the direction of the rector, undertakes the university's operation and the implementation of the university's strategy and goals.

#### ***Faculties***

**Section 6.-(1)** The university is divided into faculties, each of which is headed by a dean. The board determines the division into faculties. A faculty can also be termed a school.

#### ***Departments (institutter)***

**Section 7.-(1)** Each faculty has a number of departments (*institutter*) whose main tasks are research, teaching and knowledge exchange. The board determines the division into departments. Each department is headed by a head of department.

#### ***Schools (skoler)***

**Section 8.-(1)** A faculty may establish schools (*skoler*) that are organisationally equivalent to departments and whose main tasks are teaching and development. Each school is headed by a head of school or director.

#### ***Centres***

**Section 9.-(1)** The university may establish centres, which are organisational units with special tasks within certain fields of research, teaching or dissemination. Centres may have a department-like character, in which the centre director has equivalent authority to a head of department.

#### ***Academic councils***

**Section 10.-(1)** At each faculty, an academic council is appointed to ensure the faculty's academic freedom and its co-determination and involvement in academic matters.

#### ***Employer panels***

**Section 11.-(1)** For each faculty, one or more employer panels are appointed, to ensure dialogue between the university and employers concerning the quality and relevance of the degree programmes for society.

### ***Graduate schools and PhD committees***

**Section 12.-(1)** At each faculty, one or more graduate schools are established through which the PhD programmes are offered. For each school, a PhD committee is appointed, to ensure that the students and academic staff have an influence on their PhD degree programmes.

### ***Boards of studies***

**Section 13.-(1)** A number of boards of studies are appointed which, in cooperation with the director of studies, ensure the organisation, implementation and development of degree programmes and teaching. In this connection, the board of studies must ensure the students' and academic staff's co-determination and involvement in degree programmes and teaching.

## **Part 3** ***The board***

### ***Composition and qualifications of members***

**Section 14.-(1)** The board consists of a total of eleven members.

- Six members are external, including the chair of the board.
- Two members are elected by and from among the academic staff.
- One member is elected by and from among the university's technical/administrative staff
- Two members are elected by and from among the university's full-time students.

*Subsection (2)* The board elects a vice-chair from among the external members.

*Subsection (3)* The members of the board must as a group have experience with, and insight into, research, research-based education, public sector consultancy, knowledge dissemination, knowledge exchange, and the other tasks of the university, in accordance with section 2(4) of the University Act, in order to be able to undertake the management of the university at a general and strategic level.

*Subsection (4)* The competencies of the appointed members must collectively reflect the university's functions and activities, cf. section 2 of the University Act. Furthermore, the appointed members must as a group possess relevant international experience in the areas of management, organisation and finance, including the evaluation of budgets and accounts. The members must hold a Master's degree or an equivalent level of education, and at least one member must have experience as a recognised researcher. The chair of the board must have experience with the strategic management of a large company or organisation and significant insight into societal issues.

*Subsection (5)* When appointing board members, an emphasis must be placed on ensuring that the members are familiar with, and respect, the Danish university tradition of autonomy, freedom of research and the involvement of scientific and scholarly expertise in society's decision-making processes.

*Subsection (6)* When appointing board members, an emphasis must be placed on ensuring that they will be capable of strengthening the university's legitimacy and reputation in the eyes of society through their professional networks and authority.

### ***Appointment of external members of the board***

**Section 15.-(1)** The external members of the board, including the chair of the board, are appointed following an open call for applications by an appointment committee, cf. section 16. The appointment of the chair of the board must be approved by the minister for higher education and science. The appointment committee strives to ensure gender-balanced representation on the board as a whole, in accordance with the principles of the Danish Equality Act.

*Subsection (2)* External members of the board are appointed in their personal capacity.

*Subsection (3)* The external members of the board, including the chair of the board, are appointed to four-year terms and may be reappointed to one or more terms, provided the total term of service does not exceed eight years.

*Subsection (4)* The appointment committee is responsible for reappointments. With regard to the chair of the board, reappointment must be approved by the minister. If the appointment committee decides not to reappoint a member, the process for appointing a new external member is initiated.

*Subsection (5)* The appointment committee must ensure that the external members fulfil the conditions set out in sections 14(3-6) and 15(2).

#### ***Appointment of the appointment committee***

**Section 16.-(1)** Cf. section 12(5) of the University Act, the rector appoints an appointment committee with nine members. The university strives to ensure gender-balanced representation on the committee as a whole, in accordance with the principles of the Danish Equality Act.

*Subsection (2)* The appointment committee consists of:

- The chair of the board, who, cf. section 12(5)(i) of the University Act, is the chair of the appointment committee, cf. however section 12(7) of the University Act.
- Five external members as follows:
  - o Two members appointed by Danish Regions and Local Government Denmark (LGDK) respectively.
  - o Two members appointed by the Confederation of Danish Industry (DI) and Business Network Aarhus respectively.
  - o One member appointed by the board of Independent Research Fund Denmark.
- One external member of the board.
- One member of the board who represents the university's employees.
- One member of the board who represents the university's students.

*Subsection (3)* The five external members, cf. subsection (2), are appointed in their personal capacity and may not be members of the board or be employees or students at Aarhus University. The members must collectively reflect the university's users and stakeholders and have insight into the university's tasks.

*Subsection (4)* Members of, or candidates for, the Folketing (Danish Parliament), regional councils, municipal councils or the European Parliament may not be appointed as external members of the appointment committee.

*Subsection (5)* The members of the appointment committee are appointed to a two-year term. The members may be appointed for a maximum continuous period of eight years; student representatives may serve a maximum continuous period of four years.

#### ***Election of internal members***

**Section 17.-(1)** The election of internal members of the board takes the form of an election between candidate lists, with the option to enter into electoral pacts. Detailed rules are set out in the election rules.

*Subsection (2)* The representatives of the academic staff, including PhD students employed by the university, are elected by and from among the full-time employees for a term of four years.

*Subsection (3)* The technical/administrative staff representative is elected by and from among these staff members for a term of four years.

*Subsection (4)* The student representatives are elected by and from among the full-time students for a term of two years.

*Subsection (5)* Members are eligible for re-election, but the total term of service may not exceed eight years.

*Subsection (6)* If an elected member resigns from the board during his/her term of service, and no alternate member has been elected, a new member is elected for the remainder of the term of service of the member concerned under the same rules as those which applied to the original election.

### ***Responsibilities of the board***

**Section 18.-(1)** The board is the highest authority of the university. The board and the chair of the board must perform the tasks stipulated in sections 10, 11 and 13 of the University Act, in addition to section 49(3) of these by-laws.

*Subsection (2)* The board must ensure the co-determination and involvement of staff and students when important decisions are taken. This is ensured by such measures as the participation of staff and students in the work of the board, academic councils and forums, PhD committees, boards of studies, liaison committees etc., cf. part 5.

### ***The work of the board and transparency in this regard***

**Section 19.-(1)** Board meetings are open to the public. However, cases may be handled behind closed doors if the nature of the case concerned or the circumstances in general render this necessary. All sensitive cases involving individuals, cases involving information about contract negotiations with private individuals or similar negotiations with public sector partners, and cases covered by legal provisions concerning confidentiality in public administration, must be handled behind closed doors.

*Subsection (2)* The material distributed to the board for each meeting, including agendas and minutes, must be made publicly available – subject to applicable legal provisions.

*Subsection (3)* Cases covered by legal provisions pertaining to confidentiality in public administration may not be made public. A document or information relating to a case that is subject to a duty of confidentiality must, however, be made publicly available in accordance with subsection (1) if the document or information is not confidential in itself.

*Subsection (4)* Sensitive cases involving individuals and cases involving information about contract negotiations with private individuals or similar negotiations with public sector partners may be exempt from the requirement that documents relating to board meetings must be made publicly available if the nature of the case concerned or the circumstances in general render this necessary. A document or information relating to a case that is subject to the first sentence must, however, be made publicly available in accordance with subsection (1), unless such publication will be in strict conflict with the intentions behind the prohibition of publication stated in the first sentence.

*Subsection (5)* Cases, including documents and information relating to these cases, which are considered behind closed doors, cf. subsection (1), second sentence, may be exempt from the requirement that board meeting material must be made public if the nature of the case concerned or the circumstances in general render this absolutely necessary.

*Subsection (6)* By agreement with the chair of the board, the rector makes information concerning the work and decisions of the board publicly available.

*Subsection (7)* The board adopts rules of procedure. The rules of procedure may include a procedure for the organisation of board meetings.

## **Part 4**

### ***Consultative bodies***

#### ***Advisory boards***

**Section 20.-(1)** On the recommendation of the dean, the rector establishes an advisory board at the faculties in cases in which this is required in order to achieve or maintain significant international accreditations of the faculty's degree programmes, or when other aspects of the faculty's central activities make this necessary.

*Subsection (2)* An advisory board must consist of external members who represent the target audience for the faculty's research, degree programmes and knowledge dissemination activities, as well as the sphere of research and education. An advisory board must include a significant proportion of members who have received their degrees from other institutions of higher learning and who have an international perspective on research, education and knowledge dissemination.

*Subsection (3)* The dean informs the advisory board of the faculty's development and strategy and solicits the advice of the advisory board within the following areas:

- 1) The overall strategy of the faculty.
- 2) The development of the degree programmes, including questions of supply and demand.
- 3) The quality of the research performed, with special focus on relationships with national and international research groups.
- 4) The effectiveness of knowledge exchange activities, with a special focus on the faculty's general ability to offer knowledge and insight in accordance with the conditions in and needs of the surrounding society.

### ***Employer panels and advisory panels***

**Section 21.-(1)** For each faculty, on the recommendation of the dean, the rector appoints one or more employer panels consisting of external members. Together, the members must have experience with, and insight into, the degree programmes and the labour market for which they prepare graduates.

*Subsection (2)* The university ensures dialogue between the employer panels and the university regarding the quality of its degree programmes and their relevance to society, and includes the employer panels in the development of new and existing degree programmes and the development of new methods of teaching and evaluation.

*Subsection (3)* The employer panels may issue statements and submit proposals to the relevant management level at the university on any matters relating to education. The employer panel must issue statements regarding all questions submitted to it by the rector or the dean.

*Subsection (4)* In the same way, advisory panels of employer representatives may be appointed within other areas besides education.

## **Part 5**

### ***Academic councils and academic forums***

#### ***Academic councils***

##### ***Composition***

**Section 22.-(1)** Each faculty appoints an academic council consisting of the dean and representatives of the academic staff, including employed PhD students, and the students, cf. section 15(4) of the University Act. Observers representing the technical/administrative staff are also elected.

*Subsection (2)* On the recommendation of the dean, the rector determines the size and composition of the council for the coming electoral period. An academic council has at least eight and no more than 22 members excluding the dean and excluding observers representing the technical/administrative staff.

*Subsection (3)* Each academic council must have two members who represent postdocs and assistant professors/researchers as well as two members who represent the PhD students. Employed PhD students are members of academic staff, while non-employed PhD students are considered students.

*Subsection (4)* When the size and composition of an academic council is to be decided, efforts must be made to ensure that academic staff, including employed PhD students, are broadly represented and that as far as possible all departments are represented.

*Subsection (5)* The number of representatives of the students accounts for 25 per cent of the number of academic staff, including employed PhD students, and including the dean. If the calculated number is a fraction, it is rounded up to the next whole number. If special representation areas are established for non-employed PhD students, these representatives are not to be included in the 25 per cent.

*Subsection (6)* Three academic council observers are elected by and from among the technical/administrative staff.

*Subsection (7)* Representatives of the academic staff and observers from the technical/administrative staff are elected for four-year terms. However, representatives for postdocs and assistant professors/researchers as well as employed PhD students who represent academic staff are elected for two-year terms. Student representatives are elected for one-year terms.

### ***Tasks***

**Section 23.-(1)** Academic councils have the following tasks:

- 1) Ensuring the development of ideas, quality, transparency and legitimacy in all decisions concerning academic issues.
- 2) Participating in the recommendation of members of advisory groups in connection with the appointment of the rector, pro-rector, deans and vice-deans. Appointments and recommendations at university level take place through the academic councils' chairmanship assembly.
- 3) Appointing members of the university's interdisciplinary advisory forums, cf. section 35(3).
- 4) Advising the dean on budgetary priorities.
- 5) Making statements to the dean concerning the internal distribution of grants.
- 6) Making statements to the dean on key strategic research questions and educational areas, and plans for knowledge exchange.
- 7) Making recommendations to the dean on the composition of expert committees to assess applicants for academic positions.
- 8) Awarding PhD and higher doctoral degrees.

*Subsection (2)* Through regular and timely involvement, the dean ensures co-determination with regard to academic questions in a broad sense. The dean must therefore discuss important issues within research, talent development, knowledge exchange and education with the academic council.

*Subsection (3)* Academic councils may make statements on all academic issues of substantial relevance to the activities of the university, and have a duty to discuss academic matters presented by the rector or dean for their consideration.

*Subsection (4)* The academic council has the right to make statements to the senior management team.

### ***Operating procedures***

**Section 24.-(1)** Each academic council selects one of its members as chair.

*Subsection (2)* The chair leads meetings and is responsible for drawing up the agenda in cooperation with the dean.

*Subsection (3)* The chair and the dean are responsible for drawing up an annual schedule and a plan for regular meetings to ensure that all relevant issues are discussed as planned and in due time. The annual schedule should include such topics as the faculty's strategy, thematic discussion of issues of principle, budget, employment and recruitment policy, and professorship policy.

*Subsection (4)* Academic councils normally hold six, and at least four, meetings per year.

*Subsection (5)* The vice-deans attend the academic councils' meetings as required.

### *Academic advising at university level*

**Section 25.-(1)** The chairs of the academic councils form a chairs' assembly.

*Subsection (2)* The chairs' assembly holds meetings with the senior management team once or twice a year, at which the chairs submit a comprehensive report on the work of the academic councils during the preceding period, and at which the senior management team informs the chairs of matters of interest to the academic councils, in particular concerning upcoming initiatives.

*Subsection (3)* The senior management team may involve the chairs' assembly in the discussion of specific cases.

*Subsection (4)* The senior management team may request the chairs' assembly to give advice in appointment cases.

*Subsection (5)* The chairs' assembly may act as the voice of the academic councils and hold regular meetings with the senior management team, cf. subsection (2).

*Subsection (6)* The chairs have a duty to inform the academic councils of the discussions in the chairs' assembly.

*Subsection (7)* Once a year, in conjunction with an ordinary meeting, the board invites the senior management team and the chairs of the academic councils to report on the work of the academic councils.

### *Departmental forums*

#### *Composition*

**Section 26.-(1)** Each department appoints a departmental forum consisting of the head of department, as well as representatives of the academic staff, including employed PhD students, the technical/administrative staff and the students.

*Subsection (2)* The head of department determines the size and structure of the departmental forum, as well as the term of office of the elected members. The forum must be of a size which enables it to function in practice. A departmental forum may have no more than 25 members.

*Subsection (3)* The composition of the departmental forum must take account of the size, composition and diversity of the department, and it must be ensured that the academic staff, PhD students, technical/administrative staff and students are appropriately represented.

*Subsection (4)* The dean approves the size and structure of the departmental forum, as well as the term of office of the elected members.

*Subsection (5)* Representatives of staff and students are elected in local elections.

#### *Tasks*

**Section 27.-(1)** A departmental forum has the following tasks:

- 1) Ensuring the development of ideas, quality, transparency and legitimacy in all decisions concerning academic issues.
- 2) Ensuring the department's academic and social identity and cohesiveness.

*Subsection (2)* Through regular and timely involvement, the head of department must ensure co-determination in respect of academic issues in a broad sense. The head of department must therefore discuss important issues within research, talent fostering, knowledge exchange and education with the departmental forum.

*Subsection (3)* The departmental forum may make statements concerning all academic issues of substantial relevance to the activities of the department, and has a duty to discuss the academic issues presented by the dean or the head of department for its consideration.

*Subsection (4)* The departmental forum has the right to make statements to the dean.

### ***Operating procedures***

**Section 28.-(1)** The departmental forum elects a chair and a vice-chair among the representatives for academic staff, including the head of department.

*Subsection (2)* The chair is responsible for convening meetings and for the agenda, in cooperation with the vice-chair.

*Subsection (3)* The chair and the vice-chair are responsible for drawing up an annual schedule and a plan for regular meetings to ensure that all relevant issues are discussed as planned and in due time. The annual schedule should include such topics as the department's strategy, thematic discussions of issues of principle, budget, employment and recruitment policy, professorship policy, the physical and social framework of the department, involvement in and development of management structures and forms, and the students' environment and welfare.

*Subsection (4)* The departmental forum holds meetings regularly.

### ***Department-like schools and centres***

**Section 29.-(1)** The rules concerning departmental forums also apply to department-like schools and centres.

## **Part 6**

### ***The rector and other members of the executive management***

#### ***Rector***

**Section 30.-(1)** The board appoints and dismisses the rector and, on the recommendation of the rector, appoints and dismisses the pro-rector(s) and the university director.

**Section 31.-(1)** The rector is appointed following external advertising according to the current rules regarding advertisements for appointments in the Danish state.

*Subsection (2)* The rector must be a recognised researcher, cf. section 2(1)(1) of the Act on the Danish National Research and Innovation Policy Council and the Danish Free Research Foundation within one of the university's subject areas, and must have insight into the educational sector. The rector must be an experienced manager and organiser of research groups and must understand the nature of the university's activities and its relationship with the society of which it is a part.

*Subsection (3)* The appointment procedure must ensure that the rector has academic and managerial legitimacy. With this in mind, the procedure is organised so as to ensure that general support can be expected from the university for the board's decision regarding the appointment to the position of rector.

*Subsection (4)* The entire board may take part in the appointment procedure, or the board may appoint an appointment committee involving a number of its members to draft an advertisement, select candidates for interview, carry out interviews and submit a recommendation to the board regarding the appointment.

*Subsection (5)* An appointment committee, appointed by and from among the board's members, cf. subsection (4), consists of the chair of the board and representatives of the external members of the board, the academic staff, the technical/administrative staff, and the students.

*Subsection (6)* The board appoints an advisory group comprising a representative of the academic staff from each faculty, a representative of the technical/administrative staff, and a student. The members are recommended by the academic councils' chairs' assembly. The chair of the board chairs the group's meetings. The group is briefed about the draft advertisement, and about the pool of applicants. The group is presented with any relevant applications which have been received and advises the board or the appointment committee on which candidates should be invited to interview for the position.

*Subsection (7)* The board conducts employment interviews, and in this connection, may solicit internal or external support.

*Subsection (8)* The decision to appoint is made by the entire board.

*Subsection (9)* The board may terminate the rector's employment in accordance with the rules in section 29 of the University Act.

### ***Tasks of the rector***

**Section 32.-(1)** The rector represents the university externally. The rector is responsible for the management of the university within the framework established by the board, cf. section 14(1) of the University Act.

*Subsection (2)* This means that the rector is responsible for:

- 1) Making decisions in all cases not assigned to the board, academy councils, boards of studies or PhD committees under the University Act.
- 2) Making recommendations to the board regarding the appointment and dismissal of pro-rector(s) and the university director.
- 3) Hiring and dismissing deans and the director of Enterprise and Innovation.
- 4) Appointing and dismissing the heads of the organisational academic units, unless this task is delegated.
- 5) Setting up graduate schools, and appointing and dismissing heads of graduate schools, unless this task is delegated.
- 6) Determining the university's internal structure within the framework established by the board.
- 7) Submitting the budget to the board and signing the accounts.
- 8) Establishing rules regarding disciplinary measures for students.
- 9) Signs contracts on behalf of the university, apart from transactions concerning real property, cf. section 49(2).
- 10) Approving all external partnerships of a binding nature for the university.
- 11) Ensuring that guidelines are in place for documentation systems in connection with evaluations and follow-up.
- 12) Ensuring the quality of the university's degree programmes, teaching, research and knowledge exchange.

*Subsection (3)* The rector authorises other managers to act on behalf of the rector within their respective areas. The rector may also authorise other employees to act on his or her behalf in particular areas. In special cases, the rector may require a full-time member of the academic staff to assume a managerial position on a temporary basis.

*Subsection (4)* The rector may establish advisory committees. The rector may ask advisory boards, employer panels, boards of studies, PhD committees, academic councils and departmental forums to discuss and provide statements concerning topics of importance for the university.

*Subsection (5)* The rector prepares standard rules of procedure governing the academic councils, boards of studies, etc.

### ***Pro-rectors***

**Section 33.-(1)** A pro-rector assists the rector in the day-to-day management, as agreed with the rector. If several pro-rectors are appointed, one of them shall act as the rector's deputy.

*Subsection (2)* Pro-rectors are appointed by the board on the recommendation of the rector.

*Subsection (3)*, section 31(1), (2), second sentence, (3) and (8) will also apply to the appointment of pro-rectors. In addition, section 31(2), first sentence, will also apply to the appointment of the pro-rector who acts as the rector's deputy.

*Subsection (4)* At the start of the appointment procedure, the rector will set up a consultative group consisting of a representative of the academic staff from each faculty, a representative of the technical/administrative staff, and a student. The members are recommended by the academic councils'

chairs' assembly. The group is briefed about the draft advertisement, and about the pool of applicants. The group is shown any relevant applications that have been received, and advises the rector about which candidates should be invited to attend an interview.

*Subsection (5)* The rector conducts interviews, and in this connection, may solicit internal or external support.

*Subsection (6)* The board may terminate the pro-rector's employment on the recommendation of the rector and in accordance with the rules in section 29 of the University Act.

### ***University director***

**Section 34.-(1)** The university director heads the administration of the university.

*Subsection (2)* The university director is appointed by the board on the recommendation of the rector.

*Subsection (3)* The university director is appointed following external advertising according to the current rules regarding advertisements for appointments in the Danish state. The university director must have experience in administration and management.

*Subsection (4)* At the start of the appointment procedure, the rector appoints a consultative group consisting of representatives of the university's administrative staff. The members are recommended by the group of deputy directors and by the Main Liaison Committee. The group is briefed about the draft advertisement, and about the pool of applicants. The group is shown any relevant applications that have been received, and advises the rector about which candidates should be invited to attend an interview.

*Subsection (5)* The rector conducts interviews, and in this connection, may solicit internal or external support.

*Subsection (6)* The board may terminate the university director's employment on the recommendation of the rector and in accordance with the rules in section 29 of the University Act.

## **Part 7**

### ***The senior management team***

**Section 35.-(1)** The senior management team consists of the rector, pro-rector(s), the university director, the deans and the director of Enterprise and Innovation. Within the framework established by legislation and the board and as determined by the rector, the senior management team is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the university, the implementation of the university's strategy and the realisation of its goals. The rector is responsible for ensuring that the senior management team exercises coherent, unified management which promotes the interests and needs of the university as a whole and which ensures that Aarhus University acts and is perceived as a single unified institution.

*Subsection (2)* Each dean and the director of Enterprise and Innovation can be assigned special leadership tasks in connection with cross-university strategic activities.

*Subsection (3)* An advisory forum to support the management team's work may be established for each strategic activity.

## **Part 8**

### ***Management of faculties***

#### ***Deans***

**Section 36.-(1)** Deans are appointed by the rector. Deans are appointed following external advertising according to the current rules regarding advertisements for appointments in the Danish state.

*Subsection (2)* The dean must be a recognised researcher, cf. section 2(1)(1) of the Act on the Danish Research and Innovation Policy Council and the Independent Research Fund Denmark, within

one of the faculty's fields, and must have experience from, and insight into, education, management and the nature of the interaction of a university with society at large.

*Subsection (3)* The appointment procedure must ensure that the dean has academic and managerial legitimacy. With this in mind, the procedure should be designed to ensure that general support can be expected from the faculty for the rector's decision regarding the appointment to the position.

*Subsection (4)* At the start of the appointment procedure, the rector appoints a consultative group consisting of representatives of the faculty's academic staff, technical/administrative staff, and students. The members are recommended by the faculty's academic council. The group is briefed about the draft advertisement, and about the pool of applicants. The group is shown any relevant applications that have been received, and advises the rector about which candidates should be invited to attend an interview.

*Subsection (5)* The rector conducts interviews, and in this connection, may solicit internal or external support.

*Subsection (6)* The rector may terminate a dean's employment in accordance with the rules in section 29 of the University Act.

### ***Tasks of the dean***

**Section 37.-(1)** On the authority of the rector, the dean represents the faculty externally and is responsible for the management of the faculty.

*Subsection (2)* On the authority of the rector and within the framework of the collaboration with the senior management team, cf. section 35, the dean must:

- 1) Assume the primary responsibility for the faculty's economy and handle the overall HR management within the faculty.
- 2) Ensure cohesion between the faculty's programmes, teaching, research and knowledge exchange.
- 3) Ensure the quality of the faculty's degree programmes, teaching, research and knowledge exchange.
- 4) Ensure the quality assurance of the faculty's degree programmes, teaching, research and knowledge exchange.
- 5) Appoint and dismiss heads of department.
- 6) Establish graduate schools at the faculty.
- 7) Appoint and dismiss heads of graduate schools.
- 8) Appoint PhD committees and recommend chairs and any vice-chairs of PhD committees after recommendation by the PhD committee in question.
- 9) Appoint boards of studies and approve chairs and vice-chairs of boards of studies.
- 10) Appoint and dismiss directors of studies following the recommendation of the boards of studies.
- 11) Approve academic regulations following the recommendation of the board of studies.

*Subsection (3)* The dean's management is subject to the involvement of the advisory services of the advisory board, employer panels and academic council, cf. sections 20-24.

### ***Vice-deans***

**Section 38.-(1)** The dean appoints one or more vice-deans, who must be approved by the rector.

Vice-deans are appointed following external advertising according to the current rules regarding advertisements for appointments in the Danish state.

*Subsection (2)* A vice-dean assists the dean in the day-to-day management of the faculty by arrangement with the dean.

*Subsection (3)* The vice-dean must be a recognised researcher, cf. section 2(1)(1) of the Act on the Danish Research and Innovation Policy Council and the Independent Research Fund Denmark,

within one of the faculty's fields, and must have experience from, and insight into, education, management and the nature of the interaction of a university with society at large.

*Subsection (4)* The appointment procedure must ensure that vice-deans have academic and managerial legitimacy.

*Subsection (5)* The dean may terminate the vice-dean's employment with the approval of the rector and in accordance with the rules in section 29 of the University Act.

## **Part 9**

### ***Director of Enterprise and Innovation***

**Section 39.-(1)** The director of Enterprise and Innovation, on the authority of the rector, heads the university's efforts to promote collaboration and innovation, including entrepreneurship.

*Subsection (2)* The rector appoints the director of Enterprise and Innovation. The director of Enterprise and Innovation is appointed following external advertising according to the current rules regarding advertisements for appointments in the Danish state.

*Subsection (3)* The director of Enterprise and Innovation must have experience with innovation and collaboration between knowledge organisations and private companies as well as public-sector organisations.

*Subsection (4)* At the start of the recruitment procedure, the rector appoints an advisory group with representatives of the university's academic and technical/administrative staff. The members are recommended by the deans and by the Main Liaison Committee. The group is briefed about the draft advertisement, and about the pool of applicants. The group is shown any relevant applications that have been received, and advises the rector about which candidates should be invited to attend an interview.

*Subsection (5)* The rector conducts interviews, and in this connection, may solicit internal or external support.

*Subsection (6)* The rector may terminate the director of Enterprise and Innovation's employment in accordance with the rules in section 29 of the University Act.

## **Part 10**

### ***Management of departments***

#### ***Heads of department (institutleder)***

**Section 40.-(1)** The dean appoints the heads of department.

*Subsection (2)* Heads of department are appointed following external advertising according to the current rules regarding advertisements for appointments in the Danish state.

*Subsection (3)* A head of department must have teaching experience and must be a recognised researcher, cf. section 2(1)(1) of the Act on the Danish Research and Innovation Policy Council and the Independent Research Fund Denmark, within one of the department's fields, or a field closely associated with the department.

*Subsection (4)* The employment procedure must ensure that heads of department have academic and managerial legitimacy. With this in mind, the procedure must be arranged to ensure that the department's general support can be expected for the decision regarding the appointment to the position.

*Subsection (5)* At the start of the appointment procedure, the dean appoints an advisory group consisting of representatives of the academic staff, the technical/administrative staff and the students of the department. Members are chosen on the recommendation of the departmental forum. The group is briefed about the draft advertisement, and about the pool of applicants. The group is shown any relevant applications that have been received, and advises about which candidates should be invited to attend an interview.

*Subsection (6)* The dean conducts interviews, and in this connection, may solicit internal or external support.

*Subsection (7)* The dean may terminate a head of department's employment in accordance with the rules in section 29 of the University Act.

### ***The tasks of the head of department***

**Section 41.-(1)** The head of department represents the department externally and, on the authority of the rector and dean, is responsible for the department's academic, financial and people management.

*Subsection (2)* The head of department plans and assigns the department's tasks, and has the authority to assign specific tasks to specific employees. The academic staff enjoy freedom of research, and research freely within the bounds of the university's research strategy when not performing work assigned by management. The framework of the university's research strategy applies to the entirety of the university. Academic staff may not be directed to perform specific tasks which require the entirety of their working hours over long periods of time, which would in essence deprive them of their freedom of research.

*Subsection (3)* The head of department safeguards the quality, cohesiveness and development of the department's degree programmes, teaching, research and knowledge exchange. The head of department is responsible for following up on the evaluations of degree programmes and teaching activities, involving the board of studies and the director of studies in this process.

*Subsection (4)* The head of department appoints a departmental forum, and the head of the department manages the department in consultation with employer panels and the departmental forum, cf. sections 21 and 26-28.

## **Part 11**

### ***Management of graduate schools***

#### ***Graduate schools and heads of graduate schools***

**Section 42.-(1)** The dean establishes and abolishes graduate schools where PhD degree programmes take place.

*Subsection (2)* Each graduate school has a graduate school head who is appointed and dismissed by the dean. The graduate school head must be a recognised researcher, cf. section 2(1)(1) of the Act on the Danish Research and Innovation Policy Council and the Independent Research Fund Denmark, and have experience from, and have insight into, the PhD degree programme. The dean solicits the necessary counsel to ensure that the appointment procedure leads to the appointment of heads of graduate schools with professional and managerial legitimacy.

*Subsection (3)* The head of graduate school will lead the graduate school, which includes the following tasks:

- 1) Approval of PhD students.
- 2) Designation of PhD supervisors.
- 3) Planning of the graduate school's PhD degree programme, including periods of study at an international research institution.
- 4) Conducting of ongoing evaluations of the graduate school's activities, and making recommendations to the dean for the follow-up of these evaluations.

#### ***PhD committees***

**Section 43.-(1)** To enable PhD students and academic staff to influence PhD degree programmes, the dean appoints PhD committees with representatives elected by and from among the academic staff and the PhD students, respectively.

*Subsection (2)* The representatives of the academic staff are elected for a term of three years at a time. The representatives of the PhD students are elected for a term of one year at a time.

*Subsection (3)* The dean appoints the chairs and any vice-chairs of PhD committees on the recommendation of the committee in question.

*Subsection (4)* The number of members is determined by the dean. A PhD committee must have a minimum of four and a maximum of 20 members. The academic scope of the graduate school is taken into consideration when determining the number of members and on any division of the committee into different areas, if applicable.

*Subsection (5)* The duties and responsibilities of the PhD committee are described in section 16 b(2) of the University Act.

## **Part 12**

### ***Directors of studies and boards of studies***

#### ***Directors of studies***

**Section 44.-(1)** The dean defines the directors of studies' responsibilities in relation to the structure of the board of studies.

*Subsection (2)* The dean appoints and dismisses directors of studies on the recommendation of the board(s) of studies in question. The director of studies must be appointed from among academic staff. A director of studies is appointed for three years at a time. Appointment can be renewed several times.

*Subsection (3)* In cooperation with the board of studies, the director of studies is responsible for the practical organisation of teaching, tests and other forms of assessment which form part of examinations. The director of studies approves thesis proposals and the dates of submission for Master's degree theses and accompanying plans for the supervision of Master's thesis students.

#### ***Boards of studies***

**Section 45.-(1)** Boards of studies are established and abolished by the relevant dean after a public consultation involving the departments in question.

*Subsection (2)* Boards of studies may be established which cover one or more degree programmes, and boards of studies may also be established at different levels. If boards of studies are established at different levels, the dean determines the distribution of tasks among them.

*Subsection (3)* Boards of studies consist of an equal number of representatives of the academic staff and students. The number of members is determined by the dean. A board of studies must have a minimum of four and a maximum of 18 members.

*Subsection (4)* The range of disciplines covered in the degree programme elements to be governed by the board of studies must be taken into account when determining the number of members it is to include. This should also be taken into account in the event that the board of studies is to include subdivisions which represent different areas.

*Subsection (5)* The duties and responsibilities of the boards of studies are described in section 18(4) of the University Act.

**Section 46.-(1)** Representatives of the academic staff on boards of studies are elected for three-year terms by and from among the academic staff in the area governed by the board of studies in question.

*Subsection (2)* Student representatives on the boards of studies are elected for one-year terms by and from among the students in the area governed by the board of studies in question..

### ***Chair and vice-chair***

**Section 47.-(1)** The board of studies elects a chair to a one-year term. The chair can be the director of studies. The chair is elected from among academic staff members who are members of the board.

*Subsection (2)* The board of studies elects a vice-chair from among its student members. The vice-chair participates in the organisation of the work of the board of studies.

*Subsection (3)* The dean approves the elected chair and vice-chair.

### **Part 13** ***Elections***

**Section 48.-(1)** The rector determines the rules for elections to the board, academic councils, PhD committees and boards of studies.

### **Part 14** ***Financial matters***

**Section 49.-(1)** The university is legally bound by the rector's signature, cf. subsection (2) below.

*Subsection (2)* With regard to financial transactions involving property, the university is legally bound by the signature of the chair of the board and a member of the board.

*Subsection (3)* The university must, cf. section 21(4) of the University Act, invest liquid assets in accordance with the Ministry of Justice's ministerial order on the placement and management of foundations' assets, cf. Ministerial Order no. 1525 of 28 October 2020. The board may approve that the university makes use of multiple approved asset management divisions cf. section 18(1) and (3) of the ministerial order.

**Section 50.-(1)** The university may establish trusts for donated funds if requested by the donor.

### **Part 15** ***Special circumstances***

**Section 51.-(1)** Aarhus University may use the Danish term for 'business school' (handelshøjskolen), cf. section 38(7) of the University Act.

**Section 52.-(1)** The following bodies are regulated by addendums to these by-laws:

- 1) the PhD council at Aarhus University.
- 2) the Partnership for Child Research.

### **Part 16** ***Approval and entry into force***

**Section 53.-(1)** These by-laws may be amended by the board. Amendments to the by-laws must be approved by the Danish Agency for Higher Education and Science as authorised in accordance with section 1(1) of ministerial order no. 1118 of 28 October 2024 on the delegation of the powers of the minister for higher education and science to the Danish Agency for Higher Education and Science and on the regulation of the appeals procedure.

**Section 54.-(1)** These by-laws enter into force on their approval by the agency. However, the provisions in section 22(3) come into effect in connection with the next election of representatives for academic staff to academic councils, i.e. the 2027 election.

*Subsection (2)* At the same time, the Aarhus University by-laws approved by the Danish Agency for Higher Education and Science on 16 December 2022 are repealed.

Adopted by the board of Aarhus University on 26 May 2025.

Birgitte Nauntofte  
Chair of the Aarhus University Board, 3 October 2025

Approved by the Danish Agency for Higher Education and Science, 24 November 2025

Mikkel Leihardt  
Director