

Research programmes, research centres etc. at the Faculty of Arts

In connection with the restructuring process at the Faculty of Arts (see appendix 1), it was decided that the faculty management team should make framework decisions for the way research is organised at faculty level – leaving it up to the schools to organise their research at local level within this overall framework. It was also decided that research focus areas could be established at faculty level. As a result of this decision, there was an extended faculty management meeting on 27-28 August to discuss the evaluation of the research programmes and the way the decision should be put into practice.

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Page 1/4

In future the faculty's research will be organised at three general levels: 1) self-initiated, network-oriented research collaboration at one or more schools etc., 2) internal research organisation at individual schools, and 3) joint faculty research programmes or centres. There is no basic difference in the priorities of the three levels, which only reflect organisational ownership.

Schools at the Faculty of Arts

After evaluating the research programmes, the schools will continue to determine the way their research is organised internally. At the Sandbjerg seminar there was support for the idea that all the schools should also ensure that bottom-up organisation was possible in research collaborations which are self-initiated and which do not require advance approval. As far as possible, these research groups should also be flexible enough to ensure the option of bottom-up collaboration across the schools etc. It was also agreed that organisation at the schools should be dynamic so that initiatives at school level could be changed organisationally into broader faculty collaborations. Research management will be anchored at the department to which the member of academic staff concerned is affiliated, cf. the staff management tasks of the heads of department. Long-term research tasks can be located in a research centre or research programme, for instance.

Research programmes and centres at the schools

The schools can still decide to establish school-based research programmes; and in accordance with the decision made during the faculty's restructuring process, schools can also decide to establish school-based research centres. Centres including parties outside the university are also subject to the approval of the dean or rector. Before deciding to establish a research centre at a school, the head of school must consult the other schools regarding the name of the centre and other issues. This is to prevent

any initiatives from overlapping. The decision to establish a research centre at school level also requires discussions in school forums and research committees. A school-based research centre can only be established for a specific period of time (five years, for instance), although this can be extended subject to further discussion. Proposals for school-based research centres must contain the centre's name and school connection, a brief description of its objective, information about when it starts, how long it lasts and its financial situation, and information about any partners from outside the school in question. Research centres may also involve collaboration between more than one school etc., although they must be anchored at one particular school in terms of their organisation. School-based research centres can be established as the research base for degree programmes.

School research centres must be shown on the school homepage, which should be updated on a regular basis to show the activities of each centre. If there are no activities for a lengthy period of time, the school may decide to close the centre in question earlier than planned. The finances of school-based research centres are managed by the school concerned, but can also be based on external project funding or similar arrangements. When it is decided to establish a school-based research centre, the head of school will appoint a centre director. Centre directors at school-based research centres do not have HR responsibilities, but they are in charge of collaboration regarding the centre's research activities and refer in terms of their tasks to the head of school. The school will inform the faculty of decisions to establish new school-based research centres.

Joint faculty research focus areas

As part of the planning of the Sandbjerg seminar, a number of ideas were produced by the schools and the Centre for Teaching Development and Digital Media (CUDiM) with a view to identifying possible themes for joint faculty research focus areas. Thoughts about possible themes were presented at the schools and CUDiM in the late summer of 2015. However, at the request of the Academic Council the faculty management team has decided to postpone the discussion of possible faculty research focus areas until 1 March 2016. This means that the process of generating ideas at the schools can continue until early 2016, with the schools and CUDiM submitting proposals for possible faculty research themes following a thorough and inclusive process which also allows cross-school consultations. In the intervening period the faculty will establish the framework for future cross-faculty initiatives. The following framework for cross-faculty research focus areas is proposed:

- Faculty research focus areas will be established in the form of faculty research programmes following a decision by the faculty management team and the advice of the Academic Council.
- Two-four faculty research programmes will be established with effect from 1 February 2017, with the option of agreeing on additional programmes subsequently.
- All the programmes will last a pre-defined period of three-five years, which can be extended subject to a decision by the faculty management team and the advice of the Academic Council.

- In terms of their organisation, faculty research programmes will be located at the school at which the research programme director is employed.
- The work done in a faculty research programme will be led by a research programme director, who will be advised by a steering committee including representatives of all the schools taking part and CUDiM.
- The faculty research programmes will draw up a plan of activity and an annual report. These must be shown on the faculty homepage, which should be updated on a regular basis to show the activities of each programme.
- Administrative support will be arranged with the faculty, but will be located at the schools.
- Research programmes must not lead to the appointment of new staff.
- The directors of faculty research programmes do not have HR responsibilities and refer personally to the head of school; but they are in charge of collaboration regarding the programme's research activities and in terms of their tasks they refer to the dean and faculty management team.
- Faculty research programmes are temporary focus areas with a significant strategic development dimension and academic scope. They can be adopted as part of strategic efforts with a view to developing a promising research area, maintaining or expanding positions of strength, or establishing collaborative relations with other universities and institutions. They may also focus on the development of capacity within a research field. Finally, the schools may propose that decentral research initiatives should be raised to faculty level if this is deemed to strengthen cross-disciplinary research collaboration and include additional research environments in this collaboration.
- Proposals for new faculty research focus areas should be submitted to the faculty management team by the schools and CUDiM after discussions in the research committee and school forum, following thorough and transparent internal discussions. The schools are responsible for ensuring that the proposals submitted have the required scope and representativeness. Decisions to establish or extend research programmes are taken by the faculty management team after consulting the Academic Council.
- Faculty research centres can be established using the same principles.

Appendix 1: Extract of the faculty's decisions in connection with the restructuring process at the Faculty of Arts, 17 December 2014

Research programmes

The consultation responses and comments received in connection with the faculty review include various opinions about the importance of our research programmes, with some people wanting a more flexible way of organising research. Positive comments have also been received regarding the important role of the research programmes and research committees. At the joint meetings and in the consultation responses there has been no clear picture of people's wishes with regard to the way research should be organised in future. Consequently, the faculty management team has decided to make framework decisions for the way research is organised at faculty level – leaving it up to the schools to organise their research at local level within this overall framework.

Decision 10) Participation in research programmes will be made voluntary. The faculty management team maintains that we should continue to have an organisational framework for research collaboration. The current research programmes will continue throughout the planned period and will be evaluated in mid-2015. The evaluation will form the basis of the way research is organised in future, with the emphasis being placed on flexibility. Research will be organised based on the academic environments and will be designed to comply with the wishes of the schools.

Once the current research programmes have been evaluated as planned in mid-2015, it will be possible to establish new research programmes. At the request of the schools and academic environments, the faculty management team may also establish cross-disciplinary research initiatives. The schools may wish to establish other frameworks for research collaboration in addition to the research programmes. At departments which are not covered by a research programme, the responsibility for research collaboration may be transferred to a research coordinator. Each school will decide how to distribute the work between research programme directors and research coordinators (if there are any), but must ensure that the research environments are broadly represented in their research committees. After the research programmes have been evaluated in mid-2015, the faculty management team and Academic Council will consider whether there is a need for a clearer financial framework for research initiatives.

Appendix 2: Link to guidelines for schools and centres at Aarhus University

<http://www.au.dk/om/organisation/regelsamling/0%3A-styrelse,-administration/01/0113institutterogcentrevedaarhusuniversitet/>