
“Dogma 18” – a new paradigm for supplementary subjects

Background and premises

Dogma 18 – a new paradigm for supplementary subjects has been drawn up based on the decision to revise our portfolio of supplementary subjects which was made in the early summer of 2018 (see appendix). The faculty management team’s decision defines the framework for this task. It was decided

- That in future we should draw a clear distinction between subsidiary subjects and supplementary subjects
- That this reform process should only relate to supplementary subjects
- That all our current supplementary subjects should be reconsidered – should they continue or not?
- That a new range of 11-12 supplementary subjects should then be developed (this is the number required, assuming that there are 30 students per supplementary subject)
- That the students should be given the opportunity to choose freely from among the supplementary subjects on offer
- That supplementary subjects should be cross-disciplinary to ensure that they are relevant for several subject areas
- And that the current dual-subject paradigm should be replaced by a new paradigm

The management’s decision also meant that the first step in the process would be a proposal by the vice-dean for education describing the new role which our supplementary subjects should play. *Dogma 18 – a new paradigm for supplementary subjects* is our way of meeting this challenge.

According to *Dogma 18*, in future supplementary subjects

- 1) Must pursue the main objective of supplementing or increasing the core academic competence of the students

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- 2) Must be relevant for several subjects at the same time
- 3) Must give the students the opportunity to continue to work on their core academic competence while studying a new, supplementary academic area
- 4) Must incorporate application-oriented elements in at least one of the courses they contain
- 5) Must be specially designed, rounded wholes based on a “15+30 ECTS” logic across the two semesters and a “10+10+10 ECTS” or “10+20 ECTS” logic on the sixth semester
- 6) Must offer research-based teaching corresponding to the norm for a teaching semester at the Faculty of Arts
- 7) Must be robust enough to ensure that they do not need evaluation until they have been conducted three times (i.e. the first time should be in 2024)

Dogma 18

We wish to create a new range of supplementary subjects and to reduce their number. And the document we call “Dogma 18” outlines a number of clear rules that briefly define the role and function of these new supplementary subjects. However, these rules are also based on a broader rationale. There are seven rules (what we call “dogmas”), and the rationale on which they are based is explained below.

Dogma no. 1: supplementing and increasing the core academic competence of the students

Dogma no. 1 changes the principles on which our current portfolio of supplementary subjects is based in two respects:

- For one thing, it marks the end of the previous dual-subject paradigm. The original intention of this dual-subject paradigm was to give our students the opportunity to sample another subject area which is different from their own core area of study. But according to *Dogma 18*, the simple addition of a new subject area is no longer sufficient. Dogma no. 1 states that in future supplementary subjects must live up to their name and be genuine supplements adding value to the core academic competences of our students.
- Dogma no. 1 also means that any rationales governing the establishment of supplementary subjects other than consideration of the learning outcomes of our students will not be allowed to play any more than a secondary role. Naturally, the teaching provided on our supplementary subjects has always been aimed at increasing the academic insight of the students. But in the past the opportunity for co-teaching with our Bachelor’s degree programmes and allowing room for academic development has also played a role in our discussion of which supplementary subjects should be included in the faculty’s portfolio. In other words, dogma no. 1 indicates that in future our supplementary subjects must be based on a learning-oriented perspective, seeking to improve the overall learning outcomes of our Bachelor’s degree programmes.

As a result of these two adjustments, the main objective of our supplementary subjects will be to create an arena in which the students can continue to focus on their core academic competences while encountering a new supplementary subject context.

Dogma no. 2: relevance for multiple subjects

Dogma no. 2 seeks to accept the ultimate consequence of the fact that these subjects are “supplementary”. Our supplementary subjects will no longer merely present a new academic area, so they will need to transcend the conventional boundaries existing between subjects. Dogma no. 2 does not demand cross-disciplinary study because the aim is not to connect various subjects with each other, but to create a new academic context in which the students can bring their respective academic competences into play. A framework that transcends individual subject boundaries is required for this endeavour.

There are several legitimate ways of establishing this kind of framework. For instance, a cross-disciplinary theme could be used (like undertaking a grand challenge, or studying an issue of a more general nature). The point of departure could also involve a set of general competences which are deemed meaningful by all our subject areas (or at least some of them). For instance digital, global, organisational or methodical competences. Alternatively, the point of departure could involve certain sectors of the labour market which call for specific ways of reflecting on the world (like our current supplementary subjects in journalism or museology, for instance). Other approaches are also possible.

In this connection, it is important to draw a distinction between the supplementary subjects we offer, and the supplementary subjects in which the students are interested. The faculty management team’s decision means that the students must retain the opportunity to choose freely from among the range of supplementary subjects on offer. This does not prevent us from deciding that certain supplementary subjects in the portfolio should be designed for *specific* subjects (or subject clusters). But it must still be possible for students to choose these supplementary subjects if they are interested in them – even students who do not belong to the specific target group for whom a supplementary subject was originally intended.

Dogma no. 3: the opportunity of continuing to work on core academic competences

Dogma no. 3 is a direct extension of the previous dogma. However, it also sends an important signal of its own. Our new supplementary subjects will only have the desired effect of supplementing and improving the qualifications of our students if they are designed to ensure that *the various academic competences of the students can be deployed in a positive manner*. If the students are to continue to work on their core academic competences within the framework of their supplementary subject, the content of our supplementary subjects and the way the teaching is organised need to be considered from a didactic perspective.

The point is not that the teachers must master all the different academic areas of the students involved, but that our supplementary subjects should be organised with a view to

enabling students to use their core academic competences in the encounter with their supplementary subject. So the supplementary subjects must not be so full of content that the acquisition of new material makes it more difficult for the students to continue working on their core competences; and it must also be possible for the students to define their own core-area projects within the framework of the supplementary subject of their choice. It will probably also be useful to provide a good deal of collective supervision during supplementary subjects.

Dogma no. 4: incorporating application-oriented elements

Dogma no. 4 expresses the wish to balance academic aspects with application-oriented aspects in our supplementary subjects. This modest request for an application-oriented perspective reflects the intention to locate the supplementary subjects somewhere between our internationalisation electives (formerly known as humanities electives) and the present profile options on the third semester of our Master's degree programmes. The options on the third semester adopt a basic application-oriented perspective, but the same does not apply to our internationalisation electives.

In this context, dogma no. 4 indicates that our supplementary subjects must focus to some extent on an application perspective, as well as targeting the ongoing acquisition of knowledge by the students. In other words, the development of competences is not the only goal of the supplementary subjects. Instead, they should incorporate a cross-disciplinary competence dimension. A good example of the kind of mixture needed can be found in one of our current supplementary subjects: *Humanistisk organisationsudvikling* (in Danish only).

Dogma no. 5: the requirement for 15+30 and 10+10+10/10+20 ECTS

Dogma no. 5 seeks to underline two points which are related less to the academic function of our supplementary subjects, and more to the structural logic to which they belong.

- Firstly, it is important that the portion of the fifth semester devoted to a supplementary subject constitutes a single whole. There are two reasons for this:
 - Our new portfolio of supplementary subjects should help to make it possible for more students to take part of their degree programme abroad. The result of the review of our degree programmes was that the sixth semester should continue to be our window on the world; so we need to retain the option of taking what are known as *internationally designed supplementary subjects*. This means that students need to be able to take 15 ECTS credits at home on their fifth semester, and then 30 ECTS abroad on their sixth semester.
 - We need to ensure that the fifth semester enables students to do their Bachelor's project in their core subject area at the same time as they are studying a supplementary subject. The best-case scenario would be if it were possible to connect our supplementary subjects with the work done on the Bachelor's project. This has not been expressed as a demand, but the idea is that the structure of our supplementary subjects

should make it possible. This is because a wide variety of core academic competences will be involved in each supplementary subject, and because a wide range of supplementary subjects will be available for each core academic competence. So the idea of the demand for 15 ECTS credits on the fifth semester is to ensure that only one module of the supplementary subject is placed on the Bachelor's project semester, thereby preventing an excessive number of different courses from occurring at the same time.

- And secondly, it is important to structure the teaching on the sixth semester in such a way that the courses taught in English can help to increase the total volume of courses taught in English for exchange students. Our visitors need to accumulate a total of 30 ECTS credits, so it would be a good idea if our supplementary subjects corresponded to the internationalisation electives, which generate 10 ECTS credits. The reason why there are two options (10+10+10 or 10+20 ECTS credits) is that it must be possible to strengthen these links even further by doing slightly larger projects on the second semester of your supplementary subject.

Dogma no. 6: complying with the norm for research-based teaching

Dogma no. 6 has a dual purpose as well:

- A quantitative target should be set for the number of teaching hours offered. In connection with the annual quality processes, it has become apparent that in general we offer less teaching on the supplementary subject year than on the other two years of our Bachelor's degree programmes, and that this is due not only to the fact that the Bachelor's project requires a large amount of independent study. So there are good reasons to underline that we also need to increase the number of hours of teaching during the supplementary subject part of the third year of our Bachelor's degree programmes. The supplementary subject should provide about half of the 168 hours on the fifth semester, but all 168 hours on the third semester.
- It is necessary to ensure that our teaching is research based (i.e. that it is provided by permanent members of academic staff). We have discovered that a relatively large number of teaching hours on our supplementary subjects are provided by part-time academic staff. Our goal must be to ensure that the proportion of teaching provided by researchers is the same on our supplementary subjects as it is on the other elements of our Bachelor's degree programmes. The proportion of teaching provided by researchers at Bachelor's level must be at least 75%; and for supplementary subjects this means that part-time academic staff must not provide more than 63 hours of teaching ($85+168 \times 25\%$) per semester.

Dogma no. 7

The aim of dogma no. 7 is to maintain a certain balance in terms of how frequently our supplementary subjects should be evaluated.

- On the one hand, the aim must be to create relatively robust supplementary subjects which comply with the demand of the review of degree programmes: supplementary subjects should not require excessively frequent revision. We propose that supplementary subjects should be revised just as frequently as Bachelor's degree programmes, which are designed to ensure that each generation of students can complete a full programme. This would require supplementary subjects to be completed three times.
- On the other hand, owing to their cross-disciplinary nature, the core competences of supplementary subjects are probably more transient than longer-lasting mono-disciplinary competences. So it is important to evaluate our supplementary subjects on a relatively regular basis – not least to ensure that they are still rooted in current research. In practice, the evaluation frequency indicated by dogma no. 7 will mean that we should expect each supplementary subject to be offered for at least five years. This is because it takes time to evaluate them and to create any new supplementary subjects that may be needed to replace them.

Ongoing discussions and development

The aim of this document is to pave the way for ongoing discussions and development of the faculty's portfolio of supplementary subjects. The framework has been defined by the decisions made by the faculty management team, and the next step is to fill in this framework and develop specific supplementary subjects. I look forward to our ongoing dialogue regarding this issue.

Best wishes
Niels