

# **Internal co-examination policy at the School of Culture and Society**

(English version)

## Background: Reprioritisation of resources

In connection with the degree programme resizing and review at the Faculty of Arts, it has been necessary to look at the amount of resources (working hours) spent on courses and exams. In autumn 2016, the school management team at the School of Culture and Society approved that new academic regulations should be prepared in accordance with frameworks that define the maximum number of working hours allocated to each degree programme. In this regard, the aim was to prioritise working hours for activities in which the students meet the teachers: scheduled lessons and supervision/feedback.

In connection with new academic regulations, one working hour was allocated to supervision and feedback per student per semester. The degree programme boards were asked to consider how the hours are to be distributed between courses and activities on the individual degree programmes (“the feedback project at the School of Culture and Society”).

At the same time, it was announced that a restriction on the use of internal co-examination should gradually be introduced for written assignments in connection with the implementation of the new academic regulations. Unfortunately, this has not been done consistently and according to the same model across departments due to a lack of common guidelines at the schools. The common guidelines are presented below.

## Guidelines for internal co-examination at the School of Culture and Society

*General principle:* In general, only one assessor is assigned to written exam assignments with internal assessment (written take-home assignments on a topic of the student’s choice, set take-home assignments, written on-site exams and written portfolio assignments).

### *Pass/not pass*

If the form of assessment is pass/not pass, the principle of one assessor in connection with written assignments always applies. Furthermore, a second assessor must always be assigned to exam assignments that are initially deemed not to pass.

### *Graded assignments*

In general, one assessor is assigned to written graded assignments if the examiner is an experienced assistant professor, associate professor or professor.

A second assessor must always be involved in the following cases:

- 1) When the examiner initially gives the exam assignment a failing grade (grade 00 or -3)
- 2) When the examiner is in doubt about the assessment. The new assessor should not receive information beforehand about the reason for assigning a second assessor.

### *Possibility of assigning two assessors*

The head of department can assign two assessors to all exam assignments on a course if the examiner is a part-time lecturer, a PhD student or a newly recruited assistant professor (e.g. it is standard practice at one of the departments at the School of Culture and Society for new colleagues to have a co-examiner in connection with exams on the first three courses). In case of doubt, it is up to the head of department to decide whether to assign two assessors.

### *Possibility of “random co-examination” in connection with written assignments:*

The head of department can select one or more courses to be subject to “random co-examination” either as a fixed principle or as part of a rotation system (e.g. every two years).

This means that a small part of the assignments are read by two assessors (in addition to the assignments where the examiner is in doubt about the assessment) to ensure a common interpretation of the assessment

criteria of the academic regulations. In principle, one out of six assignments is read by the appointed co-examiner. These assignments are randomly selected by the examination administration.

<i>Number of assignments</i>	Up to 15	15-21	21-27	28-31	32-35	36-42
<i>Read by co-examiner</i>	2	3	4	5	6	7

The randomly selected assignments are made available to the co-examiner at the beginning of the exam period. Assignments that are just barely deemed to pass must be made available at the examiner's request.

#### *Description of practice and cooperation with the examination secretary*

The head of department appoints in advance an internal co-examiner from the exam schedule. The head of department uses the exam schedule to inform the examination administration of whether to apply random co-examination or co-examination in connection with assignments just barely deemed to pass. The examination secretary assigns the internal co-examiner to the exam, but he or she will not have access to the assignments until the examiner has written an email to the examination secretary specifying which assignments require co-examination (cc the internal co-examiner). Please note that the name of the co-examiner does not appear in the Digital Exams system, but is stated on the circulated exam schedule for the degree programme or department.

#### Evaluation of policy for increased use of feedback and less internal co-examination

The degree programme board and the board of studies must continuously evaluate whether the students receive the agreed feedback and whether the form of feedback chosen is efficient.

After the 2021 summer exams, the school will look at the total resource use in connection with exams, internal co-examination and feedback, as well as how the students benefit from this, in order to assess whether it was the right decision to introduce more structured feedback and limit the extent of internal co-examination. The director of studies will continually assess whether less internal co-examination has given rise to complaints about exam assessments which can be ascribed to assessments being carried out by only one assessor.

#### Background: The Ministerial Order on University Examinations and Grading (the Examination Order)

The Examination Order regulates a number of matters relating to the organisation and assessment of exams at the universities. Section 22 lays down rules for assessment:

*22.-(1) Examinations are either internal or external.*

*(2) Internal examinations are assessed by one or more members of the university's teaching staff (examiners) appointed by the university from among the teaching staff at the university.*

*(3) External examinations are assessed by one or more examiners and by one or more co-examiners appointed by the Danish Agency for Higher Education, see title II on co-examination.*

Academic regulations at Aarhus University (in the EDDI system) use the term "internal co-examination", which is generally interpreted as always involving an examiner and an internal co-examiner.

This is misleading, and the correct term to use would be "internal assessment", which allows the university to define whether there should be one OR more assessors. In connection with "external exams", however, the involvement of both an (internal) examiner AND an external co-examiner is required.

The other two schools at the Faculty of Arts have similar policies for internal co-examination (first introduced at the School of Communication and Culture for the winter exams 2014-15 and evaluated in autumn 2015).

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