

# Rules and practice concerning the teacher training programme for assistant professors and post.docs

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The rules on the *teacher training programme for assistant professors and post.docs* were adopted by [the Senate in 1994](#). The rules were based on the ministerial *Stillingsstrukturnotat* (Job structure memo), which defined the assistant professorship as a pedagogical training position and stated that pedagogical qualifications had to be acquired in order for assistant professors to be promoted to associate professors.

Since the rules were drawn up, (i) requirements have been introduced for pedagogical qualifications in development contracts, accreditation provisions and quality assurance policies; (ii) Aarhus University has invested significant resources in educational development and teacher training programmes targeted not exclusively at assistant professors, but also at teachers at all career levels; (iii) Aarhus University has adopted a portfolio policy in connection with appointments; and (iv) Aarhus University was involved in a merger in 2007 and was reorganised in 2012.

The *teacher training programme for assistant professors and post.docs* has existed for almost 20 years, and has developed during that time in terms of scope, content and form, without the rules having kept pace with this development, resulting in a large gap between the rules and the practice in the area.

## Practice for the teacher training programme

### Course part

The teacher training programme for assistant professors consists of two parts: (i) a number of course modules and (ii) practical training. The course consists of four modules – a residential course and three modules held on campus in Aarhus. The four course modules focus on planning of teaching, mastering and development of teaching techniques, use of Educational IT in teaching as well as documentation of own teaching competencies in the form of a teaching portfolio.

The course corresponds to 150 working hours. The course must be completed in one semester, however exemption is possible if applied for.

A course is offered to all Danish-speaking assistant professors each spring and autumn semester, and a course is offered to English-speaking assistant professors once a year (typically in the autumn semester).

See the programme and course dates (teacher training programmes in both Danish and English) at AU Educational Development Network's website [www.upnet.au.dk](http://www.upnet.au.dk).

## Practical part

The practical part consists of the assistant professor being affiliated with an experienced colleague from his/her own academic environment for two semesters. The assistant professor can discuss teaching-related issues with this colleague on an ongoing basis, e.g. issues concerning the planning and execution of the teaching, supervision, exam and marking as well as teaching evaluation. It is recommended that the assistant professor and the supervisor to some extent mutually attend one another's teaching sessions.

## Standard duration of the work

### Assistant professor

The values set for the standard duration of the participation in the assistant professorship programme are governed by the local working hour agreements and are, as such, a departmental issue. The values set differ widely from department to department. Some departments offer no compensation, while others have agreed on a reduction of teaching hours or similar.

Example: In connection with new values being set in 2012, the School of Business and Social Sciences, BSS, has decided that all assistant professors must teach a maximum of 75% of the standard teaching hours for an associate professor to allow them time to attend teacher training programmes and launch new research. However, this harmonisation among the departments at BSS is brand-new and only applies at BSS.

The rules differ, and assistant professors should enquire locally about the rules.

### Supervisor

The values set for the standard duration of the work as pedagogical supervisor for an assistant professor also form part of the local working hour agreements and are, as such, a departmental issue. The values set in this area also differ widely from department to department.

### What is expected of the supervisors?

The supervisor is expected to discuss teaching-related issues on an ongoing basis over a period covering two semesters, e.g. issues concerning the planning and execution of the teaching, supervision, exam and marking as well as teaching evaluation. It is recommended that the assistant professor and the supervisor attend one another's teaching a couple of times.

### Who is responsible for appointing the assistant professor's pedagogical supervisor?

The practice differs from department to department. The head of department is ultimately responsible for appointing the supervisor. The assistant professor should be consulted as mutual trust between the assistant professor and the supervisor is crucial for a good relationship.

### Do the supervisors need to take a course?

No. Years ago, the supervisors were invited to participate in the residential course along with the assistant professor, but this is no longer the case.

Some academic areas invite all the assistant professor supervisors in a given semester to a lunch meeting for a briefing on the teacher training programme and to discuss the supervisor role. The practice differs at the various main academic areas.

### Should the assistant professor have both a pedagogical supervisor and an academic supervisor?

No. The idea is for the pedagogical supervisor to be a lecturer with expertise within the subject matter/discipline as well as within the local teaching practices.

At the former Danish School of Education (DPU) and Aarhus School of Business (ASB), the assistant professor had two supervisors, but these now also use only one supervisor.

### Is the supervisor required to assess the assistant professor?

No. The supervisor must first and foremost support the assistant professor, provide him/her with inspiration and discuss pedagogical and didactic issues relating to the course (subject-related didactics). This should be considered a supplement to the course part, which to a higher extent focuses on general didactics and university pedagogics.

The supervisor may write an assessment of (aspects) of the assistant professor's teaching and teaching competencies, which the assistant professor may choose to include in his/her own teaching portfolio along with other documents.

The assessment of the assistant professor's teaching competencies primarily takes place upon his/her application for and assessment regarding the next position (associate professorship) based on the assistant professor's overall teaching portfolio.