



Guidelines for the Selection and Involvement of External Experts in Programme Evaluations at the University of Copenhagen

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EDUCATION & STUDENTS

Objective

The University of Copenhagen evaluates all of its programmes with the involvement of external experts at least once every six years as part of its continuous and systematic efforts to assure their quality. The evaluation provides in-depth insight into the current status of the programmes, the challenges they face and any changes the faculties need to make to them. The external experts thus contribute to quality assurance and development of the the programme objectives, content, its organization and research base by discussing new ideas and perspectives. This adds value to the programme.

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“Guidelines for the Selection and Involvement of External Experts in Programme Evaluations” describes the requirements that faculties must live up to when they select external experts, and how to involve these experts in the evaluations of the study programmes.

Requirements placed on faculty procedures

The University of Copenhagen requires that faculties draw up local versions of these guidelines. They must either take the form of a separate procedure or be incorporated into the faculties’ procedures for the evaluation of study programmes.

The procedure must show that the external experts are in dialogue with students, teachers and programme management.

Selection and involving external experts

The University of Copenhagen defines external experts as individuals with substantial knowledge of the programme’s academic content and context, and individuals who add an interdisciplinary perspective. The nature and form of the need for external partners may vary according to the development potential and needs of the programme concerned. External experts

may not on a day-to-day basis be involved in the development, planning and performance of the programme. A distinction is made between non-UCPH experts and non-programme experts. Non-UCPH external experts are independent of the University, i.e., they are not affiliated with UCPH in a paid or unpaid function, while non-programme external experts are independent of the programme in question. Usually, non-UCPH experts will also be non-programme experts. However, see below the exception regarding external examiners. The University of Copenhagen makes the following minimum requirements of the number and team of external experts.

- Three external experts must be involved in a programme evaluation, at least two of whom must be from outside UCPH:
 - One non-UCPH expert must be a researcher (core academic expert).
 - The second non-UCPH expert must have an academic profile that supports specific elements of the programme evaluation, e.g. a quality-assurance expert; an external examiner; a didactics expert; an employer representative; a head of studies from a related study programme; a recruitment/marketing expert; or a representative of a special interest organisation.
 - *As far as possible*, the third expert must be a non-programme student from a related study programme. If it is not possible to identify such a student, they may be replaced with another non-programme expert.

The faculties may involve more than three external experts, and also involve the same external experts in several programme evaluations where this makes sense academically.

The programme management submits a proposal to the Dean regarding the type of external experts considered relevant to the specific issues faced by the programme. The Dean approves the team of external experts.

The faculties then decide how the experts will be involved, but UCPH requires that the external experts are in dialogue with the students, teachers and programme management, and that the programme evaluation states which type of external experts were involved and why. An employer panel member may not be an external expert for a study programme that belongs to the employer panel's programme portfolio, as the employer panel member in this case is related to the study programme.

Employer panel members as external experts

An employer panel member may be an external expert for a study programme that does not belong to the employer panel's programme portfolio. In this case, the employer panel member is not related to study programme but related to the university, as employer panels are appointed by the UCPH.

An employer panel member from an employer panel outside the UCPH may act as an institution-external expert.

External examiners as external experts

External examiners who are *not* affiliated with the programme's own corps of external examiners are deemed to be external experts.

External examiners who are affiliated with the programme's own corps of external examiners are not deemed to be non-programme experts and cannot function as external experts. An exception is if an external examiner only to a limited extent has participated in examinations on the programme or contributed to a hearing on curricula for the programme evaluated. In such cases, they are deemed to be both non-UCPH and non-programme external examiners.

Former employer panel members and former external examiners are in principle deemed to be non-UCPH and non-programme experts and can function as external experts. However, the time passed since their leaving the employer panel or the corps of external examiners combined with the level of active involvement in designing the programme should always be considered individually. For example, an external examiner who has left the corps recently is not deemed to be a non-UCPH expert if they have been actively involved in designing, planning and delivering the programme.

The role of the external experts

The role of the external experts includes quality assurance and developing the programme's objectives, content and organisation. The external experts are entitled to raise issues on the basis of data about the programme. The faculties may also request that the external experts relate to specific topics. However, UCPH stipulates that the external experts must always relate to the study programme's structure and research base.