



MEMO

Re: Guidelines for the study start at the University of Copenhagen's bachelor, professional bachelor and master's degree programmes for all students at UCPH (revised June 2022). (Updated August 2023)

By Education & Students

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EDUCATION & STUDENTS

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Purpose

These study start guidelines for the University of Copenhagen (UCPH) provide the framework for new students' study start. The overall purpose of the guidelines is to describe what new students at the University can expect from the study start. The guidelines outline the basic common principles that will support quality, shared practices and harmonisation across study start programmes.

The principles cover organisation, division of responsibility, training and quality assurance of the study start programme, including the recruitment of tutors and other students involved in the study start, and the Code of Conduct. The principles must be adhered to by all employees and volunteers who are involved in the work to plan, run and evaluate the study start on the University's programmes.

The guidelines are supplemented by four different sets of framework for a good study start, which describe the themes and learning objectives of the study start. The study start activities at UCPH must be organised in accordance with both the frameworks and the guidelines.

Local faculty procedures

On the back of the guidelines each faculty must describe its study start procedures in order to allow faculty staff and volunteers to comply with the principles of the guidelines. In their local procedures, the faculties are free to plan study start activities that take into account any special circumstances on the individual programmes.

As a minimum, local procedures must address the following areas:

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An inclusive study start

The underlying basis of the guidelines is that the study start at UCPH should be organised as an inclusive programme where the new students' different affinities and qualifications are taken into account. The faculties' study start procedures must aim to give students

- a good and smooth transition to their education and to life as a university student
- a sense of community – both with the faculty, the academic and social environment on the programme, their teachers and fellow students
- a clear alignment of expectations via insights into their education and its learning principles and thus a realistic picture of what they are entering in order to prepare them academically and socially to complete their education and be an active part of the study environment
- a study start based on inclusion and respect, and where those who are responsible for the study start programme make sure that no offensive or inappropriate activities will be going on. The University of Copenhagen does not accept behaviour that is offensive to students or employees. Students must not be exposed to activities that can be perceived as offensive, or which draw attention to gender, sexuality, age, disability, ethnicity, religion, etc., in an improper manner.

Responsibility and organisation

The overall responsibility for the study start lies with the dean, who must approve the faculty's *governance* model for the study start. From the model it must be clear who is responsible for the study start at management level and at the operational level. The dean may choose to delegate his/her responsibility to the relevant local management. The executive responsibility to organise and compose part of the programme may be delegated to permanent study start coordinators or the like. However, it is always the dean's formal responsibility to ensure that all management levels at the faculty are familiar with the University's study start package and other guidelines in connection with the study start, and that there is alignment between those at the faculty who make the decisions and those who carry out the study start programme. This is particularly important in case of staff turnover in the management group.

In their *governance* model, the faculties must describe where the responsibility for quality assurance, follow-up and evaluation lies. Furthermore, the model must show a clear division of roles for those involved in the study start (coordinators, tutors/first-year counsellors, employees and volunteers) and describe how tutors are employed. The planning of the study start at UCPH must always be in compliance with applicable rules for finance and accounting, that is follow the University's accounting instructions.

Finally, the faculties must ensure that the planning of the study start always takes into account the University's neutrality in terms of students' choice of trade union. This means that entering into exclusive agreements with trade unions is not allowed. Please see '*Letter about exclusive agreements*' from Rector Henrik C. Wegener dated 18 September 2018.

Training and recruitment of tutors etc.

In order to ensure uniform terminology across UCPH, the title of 'tutor coordinator' is for students who are employed at the faculty, while the title of 'study start coordinator' is for study administrative staff.

Each faculty must describe how they train employees and volunteers to share responsibility for the study start as UCPH representatives. It is up to each faculty to ensure that all students (employees, volunteers, tutors and others) involved in the study start have the necessary knowledge and skills to help minimise the risk of inappropriate incidents and ensure an inclusive study start for all and generally raise the level of ambition for the study start programme.

Each faculty and department must hire tutor coordinators in order to support a professional and quality-assured study start and to ensure that the tutors involved have a clear framework for their work and good opportunities to take on the task. In addition to being a tutor, the task of the tutor coordinator is to liaise between the study administration/department and the tutors, share responsibility for ensuring that the guidelines are complied with and act as the coordinator for (parts of) the department's study start.

The student volunteers/tutors involved in the study start programme must sign a written agreement/contract. All faculties must set a minimum and a maximum ratio for the number of new BA students and (volunteer) tutors on each programme. The ratio is used as a dialogue tool between the faculties and (volunteer) tutors about what a good division is between the number of new BA students and (volunteer) tutors at the study-start activities.

Study start timing

On account of standby admission or vacancies in the bachelor intake the study start should be timed to week 35 for programmes beginning in the autumn semester and to week 6 for programmes beginning in the spring semester. This timing may in special cases be deviated from if academic or administrative circumstances so warrant.

It should be noted that study-start activities do not affect students' right to the state education grant SU, as study-start activities do not count as ECTS credit awarding classes. In accordance with the University's guidelines for academic year and timetable structures, ordinary classes begin in week 36 for the autumn semester and in week 6 for the spring semester.

Evaluation

The study start is covered by the University's quality assurance system and must be quality-assured and evaluated on a regular basis. All faculties must conduct an evaluation at faculty level and ensure that the tutor groups do not do their own evaluations at the same time. The focus of the evaluation must be high response rates and high quality of the data collected.

Local faculty procedures for the study start must describe how the study start and related activities, including overnight trips/introduction camps, are evaluated. The local procedure must also describe who is responsible for the evaluation and which target groups will be involved in the evaluation.

Once a year, each associate dean presents the main points from the faculty's study start evaluations for discussion in KUUR, the Education Strategy Board.

Code of Conduct

The study start must be seen as an inclusive experience that embraces all new students. This means that all employees, volunteers and new students must be able to participate in all activities during the study start regardless of whether they want to drink alcohol or not. No participant in the study start may drink alcohol until after 17:00. This also means that there can be no activities before 17:00 that include alcohol, whether during the study start or the overnight trips. In addition, there must always be tutors/employees present at official events who can ensure the proper handling of accidents or other injuries. Furthermore, the faculty must ensure the presence at all times of sober tutors/employees to provide life-giving first aid.

Participation in an overnight trip is voluntary and students can opt out of it without the risk of missing out on important, academic introductions. Any such introductions on an overnight trip should therefore be repeated in the welcome event or in the programme introduction.