Guidelines for Programme Evaluations at the University of Copenhagen

Objective
The University of Copenhagen evaluates all of its programmes 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 results of the ongoing quality-assurance work are also compared with the outcomes of the external dialogue with graduates and employer panels. Programme evaluations are extended programme reports, i.e. they include more data, e.g. a competence matrix. The point of the competence matrix is to ensure that the descriptions of objectives for the study activities support the competence profile. The point of the research matrix is to ensure that there is cohesion between the programme’s study activities, the lecturers’ research activities and the underlying research environments.

The University places specific requirements on the content and form of the programme evaluations. The faculties determine the timetable for the preparation, evaluation and submission of the programme evaluations to the Dean and decide who will be involved. The Dean approves the programme evaluations and then reports on them to the Rector.

If a master’s programme constitutes a natural progression from a bachelor programme, the faculties can opt to present a joint report covering both¹.

In the years when the faculties conduct a programme evaluation, they do not submit programme reports, as the elements contained in the programme report are incorporated into the evaluations.

¹ In aggregate reports for bachelor and master’s programmes, quantitative data must be calculated separately for each programme.
The faculties can choose whether to evaluate all of their study programmes at once or as part of an ongoing process. Each faculty draws up a timetable that includes all of its higher education programmes and publishes it on the faculty website.

**Contents**

Programme evaluations contain at least the following fixed points:

1. Status of the programme based on analysis of quantitative and qualitative management information. What is the current status of the programme and of student progress? Does the study programme live up to the standards that the faculty has set for it? What has happened since the last report? Do the results of the course evaluations, dialogue with graduates and employers, etc. suggest any need for change? Follow-up/evaluation of initiatives launched after the previous programme evaluation/programme report.

2. Status of the follow-up plan for the most recent programme evaluation. Follow-up/evaluation of initiatives launched after the previous programme report.

3. Visions and future perspectives for the programme – in which direction is the programme heading? Is there a need for educational-strategy initiatives, i.e. interventions in the long term to improve the programme? What do the external experts recommend? On the basis of the above, an follow-up plan is drawn up for the next six years.

4. Misc.: If any of the criticisms are serious enough to warrant immediate action, this must also be included in the above-mentioned follow-up plan. If serious problems are identified, closing the programme is one of the options.

**Requirements placed on faculty procedures**

The University of Copenhagen places requirements on the faculties to establish procedures for programme evaluations. The procedure should clearly indicate who is responsible for the process, who approves the conclusions in the programme evaluation and follow-up plan (if any), who is responsible for following up on the programme evaluation and which stakeholders are involved.

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

**Selection and involving external experts**

The faculties must involve external experts in the evaluation of the study programmes. The external experts contribute to quality assurance and development of the programme objectives, content, its organization and research base by discussing new ideas and perspectives. This adds value to the programme. Requirements for the number, composition and role of external
experts are specified in “Guidelines for the Selection and Involvement of External Experts in Programme Evaluations”.

**Reporting, approval and follow-up**
The faculty submits individual programme evaluations to the Dean. The faculty then reports to the Rector.

The faculties report programme evaluations as part of their annual quality-assurance reports to the Rector. Programme evaluation reports are attached as appendices to the annual report to the Rector (see “Guidelines for the Deans’ Reports to the Rector Concerning Quality of Education”). Faculty procedures for programme evaluations must include details of the role played by the study boards.

How the Rector deals with them and provides feedback to the faculties is described in “University Procedures for Approval and Follow-up on Deans’ Reports on Quality of Education”.

**Template and publication**
The University provides the faculties with a template for the programme evaluations, which they are required to use.

The programme evaluation is an internal document for the systematic monitoring of programmes. The faculties are required to publish an annual summary of their programme evaluations.

**Quantifiable quality standards**
The faculties define their own quantifiable standards for quality at programme level. On 1 October, the deans submit their faculties’ quantifiable standards for the next report period as part of the follow-up on the annual reporting on the quality of education. The faculties must at least live up to the specific objectives stipulated in University and faculty strategies and target plans. The Rector must approve these standards by 1 December. The standards are published on the faculty websites.

All standards must ambitious. As a minimum, the faculties must compare themselves with the average drop-out rate, graduate unemployment statistics and part-time/full-time academic staff ratio at national level in the main subject area.

Where programmes have a higher score than the national average, the faculties can choose to measure their annual performance against their own data in previous years.

If national averages are not available, the faculties recommend to the Rector their own quantifiable standards for the point at which each sub-element of a programme is considered satisfactory/unsatisfactory. For example, for quantitative data, a mean value could be based on the last three years and a percentage deviation agreed. A further requirement could, for example, be
sub-standard scores for at least three consecutive years before the faculty intervenes. Qualitative material can include annual action plans, e.g. for study start or internationalisation.

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\(^2\) As of 1 October  
\(^3\) As of 1 October  
\(^4\) Drop-out rates from bachelor’s programmes are calculated for at least the first year of the programme (key data F.3.1). Drop-out rates for master’s programmes are calculated for the whole programme (key data G.1.4). Drop-out rates for academy profession and professional bachelor’s programmes are calculated both for the first year and for the entire programme. For other types of programmes, drop-out rates are not calculated or included in the programme evaluation.  
\(^5\) The number of degrees conferred in the period 1 October to 30 September (the subsequent year).  
\(^6\) Study progression is calculated as per 1 October as the weighted average number of ECTS credits per student per year. Study progression is not registered on the professional master, diploma and academy programmes (adult higher education), and therefore is not included in the evaluation for these types of programme.  
\(^7\) Completion is calculated on 1 October, and comprises the proportion of students who have completed their programmes in the prescribed time and the percentage of students who have completed in the prescribed time + one year (key data G). Completion for continuing education master’s, postgraduate diploma and higher adult education (academy) programmes is not calculated or included in the programme evaluation.  
\(^8\) For bachelor’s, master’s, academy profession and professional bachelor’s programmes, unemployment figures are calculated as the percentage of unemployed graduates 4th–7th quarter months after completing their studies. For other types of programmes, unemployment statistics are not recorded or included in the programme evaluation.  
\(^9\) The number of outgoing exchange students is calculated as per 1 October. It comprises the number of students who are doing part of their study programme abroad.
- The number of international students on the master’s programme taught in English (full degree)\textsuperscript{10}\textsuperscript{*}
- Number of teaching hours on bachelor’s and master’s programmes\textsuperscript{11}
- Full-time/part-time academic staff ratio\textsuperscript{12} (only the last year for which figures are available)
- Student/full-time academic staff ratio\textsuperscript{13} (only the last years for which figures are available)

**Qualitative material:**
- Reports by the chairs of external examiners\textsuperscript{14}
- Course evaluations, including pass rates
- Dialogue with employer panels
- Study start\textsuperscript{15}
- Dialogue with graduates\textsuperscript{16}
- Competence matrix\textsuperscript{17}
- Research matrix\textsuperscript{18}

### Standards for quality

The faculties must define standards for the following parameters, i.e. the point at which the circumstances for each parameter are deemed (un)satisfactory. The faculties must at least live up to the specific objectives stipulated in University and faculty strategies and target plans.

- Drop-out rate(s)

\textsuperscript{10} Calculated as of 1 October as the proportion of student intake on full master’s programmes taught in English (full degree) whose nationality is not Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Finnish, Icelandic or Faroese. The period counted is from 1 October to 30 September (the following year).

\textsuperscript{11} Calculated as the number of teaching hours per week during the semester for the last three completed years of study on bachelor’s- and master’s programmes.

\textsuperscript{12} They are calculated in terms of FTEs. Full-time and part-time academic staff are defined as per ministry’s method of calculating working hours. Includes the activities that are part of the study programme, i.e. teaching, preparation, supervision, exams and administration. Full-time/part-time academic staff ratios are calculated for all programmes.

\textsuperscript{13} They are calculated in terms of FTEs. Student FTEs are taken from the FTE report, while full-time members of academic staff are calculated as per the calculation for the ratio of full-time to part-time academic staff. Student/full-time academic staff ratios are calculated for programmes.

\textsuperscript{14} Programme evaluations of postgraduate diploma programmes do not include reports by the chairs of external examiners.

\textsuperscript{15} If the faculty does not arrange specific study-start activities at programme level, an account is given for both study-start at faculty level and how the programme fits into the faculty’s study activities.

\textsuperscript{16} Surveys of graduates are conducted every three years comprising the last three year groups, but at the earliest one year after graduation. The surveys are by turn included in the programme evaluation and the programme report.

\textsuperscript{17} Competence matrix: The competence matrix is designed to ensure that the description of objectives for the study activities support the programme’s competence profile.

\textsuperscript{18} Research matrix: Comparison of the programme’s study activities, the lecturers’ research activities and the underlying research environments.
• Study progression
• Graduate unemployment statistics, master’s and professional bachelor’s programmes
• Number of teaching hours on bachelor’s and master’s programmes
• Full-time/part-time academic staff ratio, FTEs
• Student/academic staff ratio, FTEs
• Study start\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{19} See Note 15.