

POLICY: SENIOR POLICY

CONTENTS

Agreement 3.08 of 1 November 2013

SENIOR POLICY FOR AALBORG UNIVERSITY

The senior policy constitutes a sub-policy under the overall staff policy for Aalborg University and is aimed at senior staff in their last years of employment at the University. The policy sets the framework for the opportunities that can be used in relation to the working conditions of senior staff and that support the university's overall strategy, including the goals established by the individual departments and sections.

The senior policy applies to the entire university, but its use will depend on specific situations and contexts. It may be decisive, for instance, whether or not a department or a section is in a phase of generational change.

Senior policy opportunities are based on general management responsibility that involves evaluating the extent to which the individual staff member, irrespective of age, fulfils the expectations in their specific job position.

1. OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the senior policy is:

- To ensure ongoing generational change in which the distribution of young and older staff members creates both innovation and continuity in an academic or administrative area
- To accommodate desires and needs regarding working conditions based on stage of life for the purpose of retention of staff, provided this is in the university's interest
- To create the opportunity for dialogue between staff members and managers so that senior staff are given the opportunity to leave the labour market in a reasonable and decent manner.

In practical terms, the senior policy objectives are supported by:

- Senior staff interviews conducted on an annual basis by line managers and senior members of staff
- Courses offered to staff and managers
- Senior policy tools offered to line managers who, from a strategic perspective, wish to retain specific senior members of staff

- Senior policy tools offered to line managers who, from a strategic perspective, wish to accommodate specific senior members of staff who wish to retire gradually from their job at the university.

2. GENERATIONAL SUCCESSION

It is crucial for the further development of Aalborg University's core services that the university can implement continuous and natural generational succession. Many staff members have been employed at the university since it was founded. This has provided continuity and a distinct academic profile. Moreover, the university's substantial growth over the past ten years has resulted in a large influx of staff, and consequently renewal.

Aalborg University is not facing a general problem caused by generational change. However, variations exist in the overall age distribution between and within the individual main areas.

It is important that the ongoing and natural succession continues, so the most skilful members of staff, including senior employees, are retained at the university, while creating room for new members of staff, including young employees. It is up to local managers to ensure that any challenges pertaining to generational change are managed well.

3. SENIOR STAFF INTERVIEWS

According to the Danish government's circular on senior employee and retirement schemes, senior members of staff must be offered a senior interview in connection with their staff performance review. Senior staff interviews may be integrated in staff performance interviews or may be conducted as separate interviews. According to AAU's senior policy, senior staff interviews are mandatory from the time a member of staff has turned 60, and available on a voluntary basis when the manager or the staff member finds them to be desirable after the staff member has turned 55.

The interview should focus on whether work tasks or working conditions should be changed as the employee grows older. For planning reasons, any plans concerning retirement time should be included. Topics such as early retirement, reduction in working hours and reduction in workload may be included.

A senior staff interview may include a dialogue on the following topics:

- present and future tasks
- development and motivation
- development needs and desires
- flexibility in organisation of work
- generational succession

4. SENIOR COURSES

The HR Department offers courses for senior staff each year. The purpose of these courses is to provide senior staff with an overview of the opportunities and consequences of retiring from the job market, and to give them a chance to discuss late-career opportunities and job development. The senior courses are supplemented by theme meetings and individual meetings to which pension fund staff are invited to provide information about more specific options and schemes.

5. SENIOR STAFF CLUB AT AALBORG UNIVERSITY

Since 1997, a Senior Staff Club has existed at Aalborg University, offering continuous social connection between former staff and the university. The HR department provides information about the club to retiring senior staff.

6. SENIOR POLICY TOOLS

The Danish government's senior and retirement benefit schemes

A senior scheme or retirement scheme can be established when the management considers this to be possible and desirable. Mutual understanding between the management and the staff member is essential as the schemes are voluntary.

The government agreement enables the establishment of retirement schemes in cases where the management considers staff reductions to be or to become necessary, and where it will then be desirable to promote this voluntary retirement.

Remuneration and other financing in connection with such senior schemes rest with the individual work place, as do other employment conditions determined by law, collective agreements and staff policies.

The possibilities are mentioned below and are described in more detail in the Circular on state-employed staff senior and retirement schemes of 29 August 2011.

a) Time reduction

Management may enter into an agreement with a specific member of staff on a reduction in working hours and the payment of an extra pension contribution corresponding, as a maximum, to the difference between the contribution calculated on the basis of the reduced working hours and the contribution made during the former rate of employment. It is a precondition that the member of staff has turned 60 and has been employed by the state for a total of ten years or more. Working hours must be at least 15 hours per week.

An agreement must be made to adapt the distribution of work tasks to the working hours (for instance between research and teaching activities for academic staff).

At AAU, such agreements may be made for a maximum period of three years, and will usually imply that the staff member retires fully after the expiry of the agreement.

b) Reduction in work tasks/work load (phased retirement)

Management may enter into an agreement with a staff member to transfer to a lower-ranking position, provided the staff member has turned 55 and has been employed full-time for the past ten years in a position including managerial responsibility, work task management or similar state-employment.

c) Senior holidays

Management may enter into an agreement with an employee on senior holidays (max. one paid holiday per month). It is a precondition that the staff member has turned 62. Senior holidays must be taken in the current calendar year and cannot be transferred from one year to the next. It is a precondition that all special holidays are taken before senior holidays.

d) Retention bonus

Management may enter into an agreement with a specific staff member on the award of a retention bonus on retirement. It is a precondition that the staff member has turned 62. A retention bonus may be awarded to staff members who agree to postpone their retirement to a specified future date. The bonus will only be payable when the staff member retires on the determined date.

If, for various reasons, the staff member retires before the determined date, the agreement regarding the bonus payment will no longer apply. The bonus is a cash payment, and no extra pension or other contributions will be payable.

e) Voluntary redundancy in connection with personnel reduction

In situations where the management finds or predicts that personnel reductions will be necessary, they may grant a redundancy payment to staff employed on a collective agreement basis who have been employed in the state system for 12, 15 or 18 years. Similarly, civil servants who retire as a result of voluntary redundancy will be awarded an annual payment supplementing their pension until they reach State Pension age.

JOB POSITIONS

In addition to the above government senior staff schemes, the university will use alternative forms of employment for senior staff they wish to retain. The option of using alternative job positions may depend on whether the employee in question occupies an academic or a support staff position. The options are listed below:

a) Part-time position

A reduction in working hours may be offered to a staff member whose place of employment is interested in retaining the employee in a part-time position.

b) Part-time lecturer

External lectureships are part-time positions which only include teaching tasks. An external lectureship may be entered into for a period of 3 years. Actual working hours are determined for each semester.

c) Hourly-paid consultants

Employment as an hourly-paid consultant may take place with a view to solving a task of a short duration or small scale. Salary is paid on the basis of a time sheet, possibly including remuneration according to a service agreement

d) Emeritus

This scheme requires that the management and the employee have a mutual interest in retaining affiliation with the department. A specific agreement about continued affiliation with the department upon retirement is concluded. This may include that the employee retains their office or other workplace for a period. No remuneration is linked to this scheme, but minor remuneration may be paid for tasks stipulated in an agreement.

MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

The HR department is available for managers who wish to establish a senior scheme for an employee, or who require more general advice. All senior staff schemes must be established through the HR department. Senior schemes applying to academic staff require the involvement and approval of a manager at level 2 (Dean/Danish Building Research Institute Director).

This agreement is valid as of 1 November 2013 and replaces the agreement reached in the Main Joint Consultation Committee on Senior Policy of 1 April 2009 as well as the accompanying guidelines.

The agreement was signed on 24/10-2013 by Finn Kjærdsdam, Chair of the Main Joint Consultation Committee, and on 31/10-2013 by Henriette Frahm, Deputy Chair of the Main Joint Consultation Committee.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The senior policy constitutes a sub-policy under the overall staff policy for Aalborg University and is aimed at senior staff in their last years of employment at the University. The policy sets the framework for the options that can be used in relation to the working conditions of senior staff and that support the university's overall strategy, including the goals established by the individual departments and sections. The agreement was concluded by the Main Joint Consultation Committee

CONTACT

For review of senior agreements, please feel free to contact Camilla Vinther Sørensen.