

**Minutes of meeting (2026-7) in the Study Board of
Build, Energy, Electronics and Mechanics in Esbjerg
07.09.2026**

Present:

Matthias Mandø (MMA) (Chair), Daniel Ortiz Arroya (DOA), Jesper Liniger (JEL), Mads Pagh Nielsen (MPN), Christian Winther Dissing (CWD), Jacob Gharib, Anette Larsen (ALL) (secretary)

Absent:

Copy:

Sara Lindberg Hildebrandt, Charlotte Slot Lolk, Anne Linde Poulsen, Pia Vestergaard Jensen, Christian Winther Dissing, Mads Pagh Nielsen, Tamas Kerekes, Gitte Hageman Christensen, Head of department, Anne Marie Hvilsom Christensen.

Minute taker: ALL

Agenda

0. Welcome to Jacob as a full member of the Study Board, incl. appointment of Jacob as vice-chairman
1. Approval of agenda
2. Follow up after last meeting 16.06.2026
3. Approval of minutes of meeting 16.06.2026
4. The Danish National Student Survey (Danmarks Studieundersøgelse)
Graduate employment survey and study environment by Christian Winther Dissing
5. General announcements (short news from the Chairman)
6. Minutes from semester group meetings (no meetings held)
7. Study programme revisions for September 2027 and applications
 - Changes to Modelling and Signal Processing
 - Progression and type of instruction in projects in BE programmes, Mechanical Engineering and Civil Engineering (note that changes to type of instruction have not been heard in the study board)
 - Other?
- Applications:
 - APEL name change
 - Mechanical Engineering – English programme
- RISK – from 120 to 75 ECTS
8. Flexible master's programmes (status)
9. Reasons for discontinuation of studies
10. Discussion about the use of AI (mail/presentation from the prodean)
(should we have a student workshop)
11. From the Faculty: Help us find AAU's first Study Environment Initiative of the Year
12. Approval of group formation document
13. Follow-up, outreach initiative (Den opsøgende Indsats)
14. Process to select Teacher of the Year – see BIO proposal
15. Formal approval of project submission dates, autumn 2026
16. AOB
17. Credit transfer and exemptions (confidential)
Three cases to be discussed

Minutes

0. Welcome to Jacob as a full member of the Study Board, incl. appointment of Jacob as vice-chairman

Jakob has become a full member. It is hereby approved that Jakob is appointed Vice Chair.

1. Approval of agenda

Approved.

2. Follow up after meeting 16.06.2026

Progression in projects. We will revert to this later today.

3. Approval of minutes of meeting

Minutes approved without comments.

4. The Danish National Student Survey (Danmarks Studieundersøgelse) Graduate employment survey and study environment by Christian Winther Dissing Danish Student Survey 2025 (Danmarks Studieundersøgelse)

General remarks

- The survey is conducted by the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science every second year.
- The presentation slides provide a short introduction to the survey, while CWD has highlighted the most relevant findings.
- A link to all results is available through Power BI.
- CWD has benchmarked the results and compared them with the 2023 survey.

Purpose of the survey

- The survey is used as part of the quality assurance of the student environment.
- There is also a financial incentive linked to the results, as 5% of the universities' basic funding is based on survey outcomes.
- The survey covers a broad range of topics related to the student environment.
- It takes approximately 45 minutes for students to complete the questionnaire, and their participation is highly appreciated.

Response Rate

- BEEM achieved an acceptable response rate.

Study Time

- The survey examines study time and students' overall workload.

Student Employment – slide 8

- Many students in Esbjerg have jobs alongside their studies, which may help explain the preceding workload results.
- For some programmes, having a part-time job is almost considered essential because many non-EU citizens must work to get SU.
- This trend is expected to continue, as the bachelor of Energy Engineering is now conducted in English, and more non-Danish speaking students are expected.

Learning Environment - slide 10

Collaboration

- Results are based on students who answered "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" to three statements regarding collaboration.
- Esbjerg scores lower than Aalborg and the faculty average on collaboration-related measures.
- However, the programme is still close to the overall AAU average.

Possible Explanations

- Access to group rooms may affect collaboration opportunities.
- Aalborg has a booking system and greater access to meeting rooms.
- Students who fall behind may be more likely to work individually rather than in project groups.
- There was discussion about whether there are systematic issues that should be addressed.
- Students continue to request more group room facilities.

Temperature Issues

- Several students reported that some rooms are so cold that it is difficult to concentrate.
- Building Services has been contacted regarding the issue.
- Similar concerns were raised last year.
- The placement of temperature sensors and ceiling-mounted radiators may be part of the problem.
- The auditoriums are often cold due to ventilation requirements. Excessive warmth later in the day has also been reported. Students reported that this negatively affects concentration. The temperature seems to be better in C1.121.

Future Improvements

- The upcoming opening of Wing A will address existing ventilation/heating issue in that wing.
- It was noted, however, that the survey results regarding the physical environment in Esbjerg are generally positive.

Study Environment

Slide 11

- The social environment score has increased by 11 percentage points.
- One possible explanation is that students spend more time in shared areas and corridors, resulting in greater interaction.

Slide 12-13

- Some data is missing, which explains several zero values. It was considered unfortunate that more data on whether students perceived the physical study environment as welcoming and comfortable to spend time in physical facilities were not available.
- Overall, the results are very positive.
- Questions were raised regarding historical development and trends over time.

Well-being and Student Life

Slide 15 – Well-being

Stress

At the Department of Energy, 28% of students sometimes experience severe stress symptoms in connection with their studies in everyday life, 14% often, and 5% always.

There is no significant difference in stress levels when comparing the two study boards with each other or with the faculty and AAU averages. Nor has there been any notable development since 2023.

Sense of Belonging

When asked whether students sometimes doubt that they belong in their programme, 20% of students in Aalborg either strongly agree or agree, compared with 36% in Esbjerg. The faculty average is 37%.

Loneliness

Among students in Esbjerg, 16% have experienced loneliness often and 6% always. In Aalborg, the corresponding figures are 8% and 2%, respectively.

Comments:

Loneliness

- MMA noted that 16% of students reporting feelings of loneliness is still a significant proportion.
- One hypothesis is that reduced physical presence on campus may contribute to feelings of loneliness.
- This remains an area of concern.

There are already many social initiatives, e.g. the **following**:

Study Life Fair

- The Study Life Fair included 52 activity stands and was viewed very positively.
- Previously aimed primarily at bachelor's students, the event now also targets master's students.
- This is considered a substantial improvement, and the hope is that it will be reflected in future survey results.

Student Organisations and Activities

- Jacob was not surprised by the figures but noted that the results are concerning compared with Aalborg.
- The Study Environment Council is already working actively on this issue.
- The high proportion of international students may also influence the results.

IDA Activities

- Jacob highlighted a positive experience with an IDA event, which helped him meet new people. However, awareness of IDA activities tends to decline after the first semesters. Activities should be promoted more actively to students in later semesters.
- IDA has decided not to maintain a local student ambassador in Esbjerg. Ambassadors from Aarhus currently cover Esbjerg, but efforts are ongoing to re-establish a local representative.

Indicator Benchmarking

Slide 17

- Survey results were converted into an index score format.
- Scores closer to 5 indicate stronger performance.

Surface Learning

- The survey includes indicators measuring how easily students can understand and engage with course content.

Overall Results

- MPN described the results as strong.
- No programmes received evaluation scores below 2.5.
- Detailed results can be explored in Power BI.

Benchmarking with Other Universities

- Questions were raised regarding access to results from comparable universities.
- Comparisons are available only at institutional level, not programme level.
- Aarhus University and the University of Southern Denmark publish results on their websites.
- Based on preliminary reviews, AAU performs well overall.
- Direct comparisons with similar programmes are not available.

Action points

- Cold teaching and group rooms
Update after meeting: MMA has talked to Campus Service in Esbjerg; they will investigate.
- Quiet study zones and possible signage.
Update after meeting: MMA has talked to the library. They have placed small signs. MMA will also talk to ASKR about quiet rooms.
- Positive feedback should be passed on to Anders (ALL) and the Communications person in Esbjerg.

Existing Efforts

- Although loneliness remains a concern, several initiatives are already underway to address it.

Graduate Survey 2025

CWD goes over the survey.

General Remarks

- The Graduate Survey was conducted in 2025.
- Response rates were relatively low.
- Due to the limited number of responses, the results are considered less informative.

Overall Assessment

- Results are generally very positive since graduates from BEEM rate their employability higher than the faculty average
- Some indicators have improved while others have declined slightly. Significantly, 93 % of the graduates consider that their study programme has equipped them well for their job.
- The changes may be influenced by the low response rate.
- No areas were identified that require immediate action.

5. General announcements

- Meeting with PBL teachers – timing of themes
- KOT survey (ENG) – 40 pages of comparison with other Danish Engineering Institutions
 - No conclusions included
 - Esbjerg seems to be steady
- Study start:
 - Around 150 out of 180 potential students participated
 - Feedback from questionnaire pending
 - This year, the participants also included master's students.
- Drop-out rate – see Matthias' slides. Challenges for this particular year of Civil Engineering
- DSUR agenda (24-08-2026)
 - IAS PBL - Flexible Education and Facilitation in future educations (2025-2027)
 - Knowledge sharing 1 year and part-time master application process

6. Minutes from semester group meetings (no meetings held)

7. Study programme revisions for September 2027 and applications

- Changes to Modelling and Signal Processing approved
- Progression and type of instruction in projects in BE programmes, Mechanical Engineering and Civil Engineering approved (note that changes to type of instruction have not been heard in the study board)

Applications:

- APEL name change
- Mechanical Engineering – English programme
- RISK
- Industrial master's

Comments:

All applications have been approved internally at AAU and will shortly be sent to the Ministry.

Changes to Modelling and Signal Processing.

- Zhenyu has made a proposal.
- Changes approved. ALL will implement.

Type of instruction in project modules

- We have aligned the wording in the Civil and Mechanical Engineering curricula.
- Changes approved. ALL will implement.

8. Flexible master's programmes (status by MPN)

ENG Faculty meeting

- MPN has presented the work on flexible master's programmes to the Faculty.
- The overall response was positive.
- The Prodean expressed support for the initiative and suggested that the process should be accelerated.

Feedback from other departments

Biotechnology (BIO)

- Very positive towards the concept.
- One concern is the absence of long final projects in the current proposal. They consider these necessary and would like them to be incorporated into the structure.

Mechanical Engineering

- Very positive about the initiative.
- However, due to their high student intake, they are reluctant to make significant changes to their existing programme.

Build

- Expressed reservations about the proposal.
- Their main concern relates to certification requirements and the associated approval processes.

Joint First-Year Concept

- MPN mentioned that a common first year across programmes has been considered. This idea is currently being explored, and Nis has expressed support for the Polytechnic-inspired approach.
- Thomas Bak, Dean of Tech, has overall responsibility for the initiative and he is supportive of flexible education models.

University Management

- MPN has also met with the Prorektor, who responded positively to the idea.

Support from Section Heads

- At a meeting with section heads last week, there was agreement that the initiative should be implemented now.

Remark from head of study board.

- There is not wide support for the proposal among the teachers group.
- There are several major issues which have not been addressed, which MUST be addressed

Current Process

The next steps include:

- Discussion of the proposal at the next Study Board meetings.

Comments:

- MMA reported that a recent seminar generated substantial feedback and a number of concerns, these concerns are not unique and are shared by many teachers.
- MPN assured that all issues raised during the workshop will be carefully reconsidered.
- The ultimate goal is to admit more students.

Student Perspective and Quality Assurance

- JEL referred to student data previously presented by Christian:
- Although student numbers are low, student satisfaction is high.
- It is important to continuously monitor how the proposed changes affect students.
- Comparisons with universities that already offer flexible programmes will be valuable, particularly DTU.

Experience from DTU

- MPN: Meetings have been held with deans from DTU. One concern is whether students have the necessary competencies and we have learned that DTU faces similar challenges.
- MPN: To address this, mentoring tools and support mechanisms are planned.

Importance of the First Year

- A strong introduction during the first year is considered essential.

Action point

- Ensure that the topic is included for approval on the agenda for the next Study Board meeting.

9. Reasons for discontinuation of studies

Translation of list of reasons for discontinuation:

- 1a. The academic level is too high for me.
- 1c. The content of the programme did not meet my expectations.
- 1d. I am not interested in the jobs this programme leads to.
- 1e. I have lost academic interest in the programme.
- 1g. I would prefer a more practice-oriented or professionally oriented programme.
- 1h. Personal health-related reasons.
- 1j. I am unable to combine my own business/employment with my studies.
- 1k. I want to prioritise employment opportunities, an apprenticeship, or similar.
- 1l. I prefer another programme at Aalborg University.
- 1m. I prefer another programme outside Aalborg University.
- 1n. Family-related reasons, such as children, a partner's new job, illness, relocation, etc.
- 1p. I find that the programme lacks sufficient structure.
- 1t. I experience a lack of social and academic community with fellow students and/or a poor study environment.
- 2b. Circumstances related to COVID-19.
- 2c. Other reason.

MMA reviews the list and notes that the most frequently stated reason varies from year to year. We try to adjust the expectations of the study programme at our web page.

10. Discussion about the use of AI (mail/presentation from the prodean) (should we have a student workshop)

The study board discussed whether an AI workshop for students is needed. It was suggested to provide a short introduction on the appropriate use of AI at the start of each semester. However, the study board concluded that the existing guidance, including slides and module-specific information, is currently sufficient. Cases of plagiarism will continue to be handled under the existing academic misconduct procedures.

11. From the Faculty: Help us find AAU's first Study Environment Initiative of the Year

The study board discussed the study environment initiative. Possible candidates for the award included *Smuthullet* and activities at *SSE*. Jacob agreed to consult fellow students and provide feedback.

12. Approval of group formation document

The revised documents can be found in beem-bilag.

MMA proposes that we continue with current practice in Esbjerg.

Document to be amended as proposed. Document is approved. ALL will implement.

13. Follow-up, outreach initiative (Den opsøgende Indsats)

For your information. Please see mail in beem-bilag.

14 Process to select Teacher of the Year – see BIO proposal

BIO has changed its Teacher of the Year nomination process so that students now submit nominations through a Microsoft Form, while the final selection is still made by the student representatives on the study board. Should we consider adopting a similar approach?

General discussion

- A selection process should remain in place. The final evaluation should not be based solely on the number of student nominations as there are concerns and challenges with relying on nomination volume alone.

Evaluation criteria

- Strong emphasis should be placed on the **quality of the nomination**, not just the quantity.
- The strength of the students' argument and justification should be assessed qualitatively.
- Jacob supports a qualitative assessment approach.
- Example raised: it would be unfair if a teacher with 100 students automatically had an advantage over a teacher with only 10 students.

Nomination platform

- DOA likes the idea of using an online solution.
- Further clarification is needed on how Forms would support the process.

Communication to students

- The nomination text should clearly explain:
- That nominations will be assessed both qualitatively and quantitatively.
- That strong, specific nominations are more likely to succeed than generic comments.
- That nominations are **not anonymous**.
- That this is a **pilot/test run** or experiment.

Next steps

- ALL to draft proposed text for the nomination process. Coordinate the draft with Jacob.
- Include wording explaining that generic nominations will have less chance of progressing in the competition.
- Set a deadline for nominations.
- Send the final text to the study secretaries for distribution to students.

15. Formal approval of project submission dates, autumn 2026

Approved.

16. AOB

Next meeting

Can we move our meeting 7 October? ALL will find new date.

External examiners corps

New IT-infrastructure for the censors' corps: Censorum – see beem-bilag.

17. Credit transfer and exemptions (confidential)

Survey of list in WorkZone.

Three cases

1. Fifth examination attempt – approved.
2. Fifth examination attempt – rejected.
3. Use of head phones during written exams, connected to phone – we request more information.

Action points for Study board meeting in October 2026

4. The Danish National Student Survey (Danmarks Studieundersøgelse)

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