Minutes of meeting (2026-09) in the Study Board of Build, Energy, Electronics and Mechanics in Esbjerg 02.11.2026

Present:
Matthias Mandø (MMA) (Chair), Daniel Ortiz Arroya (DOA), Jesper Liniger (JEL), Jacob Gharib (JAG), Anette Larsen (ALL) (secretary)

Absent: Mads Pagh Nielsen (MPN)

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

1. Approval of flexible master proposal

Minutes

1. Approval of flexible master proposal

The flexible master proposal is rejected by the study board. Attached please find the study board's statement.

From:	Matthias Mandø
To:	Vice-head of education AAU Energy; Prodekan Eng Udd; Head of AAU Energy
Cc:	Study Board in Esbjerg
Subject:	RE: Nye studieordninger - fleksibel master - Afslag
Date:	4. november 2026 16:37:15
Attachments:	BEEM SN kommentarer til Flex masters.pdf image001.png

Kære Mads, Nis og Lars

Vedhæftet fremsendes BEEM-studienævnets begrundelse for ikke at godkende de fremlagte studieordninger samt studienævnets anbefalinger til det videre arbejde.

Jeg vil særligt fremhæve, at dokumentet afspejler et enigt studienævns vurdering og beslutning.

Såfremt der er behov for uddybning af enkelte punkter, står jeg naturligvis til rådighed.

Venlig hilsen / Best regards

AAU ENERGY AALBORG UNIVERSITY

Matthias Mandø
Associate Professor | AAU Energy
Chair of the BEEM study board

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From: Matthias Mandø
Sent: Monday, November 2, 2026 12:48 PM
To: Vice-head of education AAU Energy <vice-head-education@energy.aau.dk>; Prodekan Eng Udd <prodekan-eng-udd@aau.dk>; Head of AAU Energy <head@energy.aau.dk>
Cc: Study Board in Esbjerg <StudyboardBEEM@energy.aau.dk>
Subject: Nye studieordninger - fleksibel master - Afslag

Kære Mads, Nis og Lars

Vi har netop afholdt et ekstraordinært møde i BEEM-studienævnet vedrørende de fremsendte forslag til nye studieordninger for MSc in APEL og MSc in SEE (den såkaldte Flexible Master's model).

For begge uddannelser har studienævnet efter grundig behandling enstemmigt besluttet **ikke** at godkende de fremlagte studieordninger.

Studienævnet har drøftet en række forhold af både faglig, uddannelsesmæssig og studieadministrativ karakter, som ligger til grund for beslutningen. Jeg havde forberedt et

udkast til en begrundelse, men der var på mødet ønske om at supplere denne med yderligere argumentation. Derfor forventer jeg at fremsende studienævnets samlede begrundelse og anbefalinger til det videre arbejde på onsdag.

Jeg vil dog allerede nu understrege, at afslaget ikke skyldes mindre tekniske eller redaktionelle forhold, men mere grundlæggende problemstillinger, som studienævnet vurderer bør adresseres, før studieordningerne kan genbehandles.

Venlig hilsen / Best regards

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Statement on the draft curriculum for the 'Flexible master'

Concerns about the legal base of the work with the flexible masters

According to **Section 18(4)(2) of the Danish University Act**, the Study Board is responsible for preparing proposals for study regulations and amendments thereto: "*Studienævnet har foruden de i vedtægten fastsatte opgaver til opgave at sikre tilrettelæggelse, gennemførelse og udvikling af uddannelse og undervisning, herunder 2) at udarbejde forslag til studieordning og ændringer heri,*"

The BEEM study board has not been consulted or been actively involved to an appropriate degree in the process regarding working out a new proposal for a curriculumn. The university law is there to *"sikre de studerendes og de videnskabelige medarbejderes medbestemmelse på og medinddragelse i uddannelse og undervisning."* The proposal has not been presented to students in Esbjerg, and the study board finds that there has not been sufficient student involvement in this process. The teaching staff have been involved in three seminars, provided amble feedback and raised many concerns regarding the proposal, but there has been a lack of transparency in the decision-making process and concerns raised have not been sufficiently addressed in the final proposal.

Similarly, the educations advisory board has been consulted and has expressed concerns about the proposed changes. Especially, the recruitments strategy and the abandonment of the possibility to complete a long master thesis were focus points. There have been no changes in the proposal based on the input from the advisory board.

To the best of the Study board's knowledge, IASPBL has also not been consulted in the process of making the proposal. With the scope of the changes the study board finds it essential to also involve AAU's experts within PBL in the discussion of a brand-new structure.

Academic Concerns Regarding the Proposed Structure:

A substantial part of the discussion in the study board focused on the pedagogical consequences of separating semesters into either course-based or project-based activities.

- AAU PBL model challenges - The current model gradually introduces students to problem-based learning (PBL) through project work and group collaboration. Students currently develop competencies in teamwork, project management, and self-directed learning from the beginning of the programme. Under the proposed structure, the first semester would become course-based, reducing opportunities for student-driven learning activities. This will fundamentally change the educational philosophy of the programme. The AAU PBL model has always had a synergy between what is taught in courses and afterwards expanded on in projects. The proposal will fundamentally challenge the basis for the AAU PBL model. With the proposal, the first project work students will experience will be a 30 ECTS module. Even if a status seminar is included this will be a major challenge. We already see group issues in the current structure. Having no introductory semester to train PBL, problems are expected to be more pronounced when they have to do a 30 ECTS project as a first project.

- No PBL project work - The proposed model also allows students to complete their study without going through any PBL project work if they choose to have a company traineeship or a study abroad and subsequently write their master thesis alone. A majority of students in Esbjerg currently chose to go on a company traineeship.

- Students are not vetted before Traineeships - Practical concerns were also raised regarding project-oriented stays and internships, particularly with respect to approval procedures, timing, and students' limited experience in the programme before such activities would take place. With the proposed structure

we would need to approve company stay before the students have passed the first semester. We risk our reputation sending out unqualified students on company stays. Usually, a company helps with the transition between the study and the first job. By having the company stay a full year before graduation this effect is expected to be reduced.

- Challenging exam format – It is an open challenge on how to examine 10 ECTS courses. The proposed model suggests intense periods of study with one course at a time followed by an exam before starting on a new course. If a student is ill, even for a short period they will miss a relatively large portion of a course, making it difficult to catch up and ultimately pass a course. This would increase the stress/study intensity for students and decrease student wellbeing. We also want to point out that we already have exams outside of the traditional exam periods in January and June. The study board is not diametrically against the very idea of 10 ECTS course modules, but having *only* 10 ECTS course modules.

- No more long master thesis – It has been a stable of the AAU model to have the possibility to make a long master thesis there the students can have the deep learning which is so sought after. A long master thesis gives the students an opportunity to perform extensive laboratory work in cooperation with research groups. Contradictory to what the proposal claims to promote, it is going to remove this possibility.

- Students admitted will not have correct qualifications – The key selling point of the proposal is that we can have a large uptake of students. We would like to point out that the admittance criteria, at least in Aalborg, are not going to change, making this essentially a false statement. The main change in the proposal is going to be electives of a few AAU micro (2-3 ECTS) meant to allow the students to catch up on certain topics. It has also frequently been suggested that the students can just read on their own during the summer. The study board, as well as educations advisory board, find this unrealistic and insufficient. We are deeply worried that we will increase the number of students who drop out because they do not have the correct qualifications for the study. Ultimately, an increase in the dropout rate will be decremental for the study programme. The study board does recognize that AAU micros provides an essential tool which can aid some students.

Industrial Master's Programme

The effect of the proposal on the part-time master's (EKA 1+2) structure was also discussed. It is essential that the part-time master's is integrated and aligned with the regular master's education.

- Misalignment between regular and part-time master - The proposed model would lead to only courses in the autumn. However, a part-time master, which has the same curriculum, but where the content on the regular 3rd semester is spread out over an entire year, would need to have course modules on both spring and autumn semester. Thus, either you offer course modules on both spring and autumn semesters, or you ask the part-time master's students to do self-study for an entire semester. Both possible solutions are unacceptable for the study board.

Flexibility and Student Recruitment

The concept of flexibility and its effect on recruitment, student wellbeing, and completion was discussed. The study board acknowledges that the concept of more freely combining topics within Sustainable Energy Engineering could contribute to attracting new student groups.

- We already integrate student work in active research – One of the selling points from the start was to have more integration between research group activities and student project work. However, the current study curriculum already allows for this. Many students are already working in close cooperation with research groups, especially for the 3+4th semester project work. On the contrary, it is a great concern that the new proposal limits cooperation by removing the possibility of a long master's thesis.

- We already have the possibility of asking students to take up to 10 ECTS of supplementary courses – One of the selling points is that we can increase student uptake by offering students and means of reading up on missing topics. The proposed curriculum proposes 3 ECTS worth of AAU micros, which although nice, is much less than two whole courses. With the proposed structure we can no longer demand that students *must* complete relevant courses on the bachelor.

- It is important that employers can clearly identify a graduate's methodological competencies from the certificate. As 10 ECTS course titles become broader and more domain-focused, key transferable skills risk becoming less visible. Given that many graduates pursue careers in domains other than those of their Master's specialization, methodologies such as machine learning, optimization, modelling, and control are often more relevant to employers than the specific application area. These competencies are easier to recognize from methodology-based course titles used for smaller 5 ECTS courses rather than from broader titles such as "Modelling and Control of Domain XX." given for many of the titles in the suggested curriculum.

Concerns for the state of the proposed curriculum

- Relevant teachers have not been consulted in the making of the curriculum – The study board find it unacceptable that all relevant topics teachers have not been involved or consulted in the making of the proposed study curriculum. Clearly, the teachers and topics experts who are expected to carry the teaching must be involved in the making of individual course modules. As it stands, teachers have not had a chance to comment on the proposal.
- No discussion in plenum of major changes. - The proposal suggests a change in the title of the offshore Energy System specialization. While a voting scheme for different titles has been performed, this has not been discussed in plenum, where arguments pro and against specific wording can be discussed.
- The study curriculum appears to be in an unfinished state – for example the course Advanced Modelling and Control of Power Electronics and others appear as empty shells and several courses are still WiP with comments and yellow marking.
- The study curriculum contains examples of 'copy-pasted' courses – For example, the course Fluid Mechanics and Compressible Flow appears as a copy paste of the course Advanced Fluid Mechanics. It has one reference to compressible flows but appears to be mainly focused on CFD and not compressible flows.
- No AAU micro has been made yet – There is still time, but the study board would like to express concern about the tight schedule for making many new AAU micros. We fear that either they will not be finalized in time for study start or that the quality will be insufficient. Rushing will be decremental for the quality.
- It is not clear how AAU Micros would be evaluated during the exam of the individual courses – The proposal does not contain any details on how AAU micros will be examined in the appropriate course modules.

Other concerns

- Teaching intensity will increase dramatically if we only have courses in autumn semester – With the new structure where will only be teaching in the autumn semester. Where the current structure distributes the teaching load on teachers evenly over the entire year, in the proposal it will be concentrated on one semester. We fear that either the quality of teaching will suffer, or other research activities will be down prioritized in that period.
- Accumulated fatigue on changes – On the educational area there is many future reforms. Especially, the introduction of one-year master, the part-time master, has drained the appetite on implementing many more changes. In Esbjerg we are currently implementing a new Energy Bachelor and applying for a new Bachelor of engineering in Mechanical engineering. It is the expectation that this will drastically increase student numbers and increase the strain on teachers. In the pipeline is already an application for a separate Bachelor of Engineering in Energy Engineering to solve existing problems of having an education

which a branch (DK: filial) of the mother education in Aalborg and not coordinated with the other educations in Esbjerg.
- Missing discussion of courses in the Esbjerg Section – There have been no coordinated discussion of the structure and course modules in the Esbjerg Section. Specifically, this has led to the robotics parts of the MSc AIAS are very weak in the new curriculum, and this is a key part of our research.

Alternative Suggestions

During the last two years where the study board have been preventing on working with the curriculum due to the ongoing process of the 'flexible masters' several issues have been identified but not solved. This is 1. The structure for the third semester needs to be updated to be in line with the requirements of the part-time masters. 2. The admission requirements need to be rethought as we no longer can have separate admission requirements for each specialization. 3. The new Power to X specialization needs to be aligned with current research and competences rather than essentially be a copy-paste of the FPS specialization with a different title. The study board suggests starting work on a revision of the current study curriculum to address these issues. Current avenues to be discussed and considered could be:

- Change the curriculum so that students have a common first semester before they are separated into specializations. This would eliminate current issues of students wanting to change specialization after they have started and we can revise admission requirements.

- The study board wishes to retain a semester project during the first semester, but we will of course look at the proposal and try to incorporate elements of the work in a new curriculum. For example, larger 10 ECTS course modules to some extent and a higher focus of electives and AAU micros.

- The study board wishes to explore new concepts for flexibility. More emphasis on so-called asynchronous teaching, so the students can study when they have time for it and are freer to plan student work and other activities.