



To the consultation participants:

- The academic councils
- The faculty management teams
- HSU and HAMU
- The Student Council, Free Forum and Conservative Students

Consultation

Freedom of expression for Aarhus University staff and students

I am writing to announce the opening of the consultation on the draft version of Aarhus University's statement on 'Freedom of expression for staff and students at Aarhus University'. The consultation parties are hereby invited to respond to the form and content of the draft and are also encouraged to use the consultation process as an occasion to discuss freedom of speech in general.

The government-appointed committee on freedom of expression published its findings on 30 April 2020. In its report, the commission recommends that the senior management teams of Danish universities initiate an overall assessment of how freedom of research, information and expression can be strengthened to the benefit of democracy in Denmark. This recommendation reflects the high importance the commission places on free and independent research: the universities contribute to the quality of society's most important decision-making processes by supplying society and its citizens with relevant knowledge.

In response to the report, the university's board and senior management team have drafted the attached statement regarding freedom of expression for staff and students at Aarhus University.

The statement affirms Aarhus University's commitment to safeguarding freedom of expression and the individual's ability to realise their potential. Open dialogue and tolerance for different views constitute the very foundation of the university's activities. For this reason, the senior management teams feels that it is important to explicitly affirm the wide latitude for freedom of expression available to university staff and students. Everyone should be able to express themselves freely in an open and peaceful debate with good tone and respect.

The next steps in the consultation process

The consultation parties will now consider the draft statement and submit their consultation response. The faculty management teams are responsible for coordinating

Rektoratet

Brian Bech Nielsen
Rektor

Dato: 24. januar 2022

Direkte tlf.: +45 8715 2025
Mobiltlf.: +45 2338 2349
E-mail: rector@au.dk
Web: au.dk/rector@au.dk

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the consultation process at their faculties; each faculty should submit a single consultation response. However, the academic councils should submit their own consultation responses.

All consultation responses will be published on Aarhus University's page on freedom of expression [freedom of speech](#) after the consultation period.

At its meeting on 7 April 2022, the board will consider the final draft of Aarhus University's paper on freedom of speech and the results of the consultation. The document will then be published and communicated at the university.

The deadline for consultation responses is 9:00 on 1 March 2022. Consultation responses should be sent to rector@au.dk.

The attached consultation materials in addition to information about the process are also available at [freedom of speech](#). Any questions may be directed to Head of the Rector's Office Staff Kristian Thorn, (kthorn@au.dk) or Senior Consultant Grith Thagaard Loft (gtl@au.dk).

The senior management team is looking forward to receiving your consultation responses.

Yours sincerely,

Brian Bech Nielsen
Rector