

Department of Economics – approach to management, recruitment, assessment and development of part-time teachers

This note outlines the CBS Department of Economics (ECON) approach to recruitment, development and management of its part-time teachers (DVIP) which aims at securing and further developing a level of teaching at the department that fulfils the requirements for teaching and teaching management at CBS. The note replaces the note on ECON's DVIP approach developed in 2018.

Overall management of DVIP

ECON has appointed an academic Teaching Coordinator, with a responsibility of overseeing all the teaching activities at ECON, but also securing that DVIP's qualifications are well met and put to use, as well as further developed. The academic Teaching Coordinator is always a senior faculty member, currently the Deputy Head of Department (DHoD).

All courses offered by ECON have an internal (VIP) as Course Responsible, with the exception of a very few courses (currently three) – these are supervised by an experienced DVIP who was previously affiliated with the Department in various research positions or who holds a researcher position at another university.

The day-to-day practical support of our DVIP is done by our Teaching Administrators, who are in close contact with our part-time teachers offering them guidance about any practical issues they might have connected with their employment. Together with the academic Teaching Coordinator, Teaching Administrators make sure that the part time teachers have participated in the pedagogical courses offered by CBS.

The ultimate responsibility for management, recruitment, assessment and development of part-time teachers rests with the Head of Department (HoD).

On a daily basis management of part-time takes place in ongoing consultation between the teaching administration, course responsables, the academic teaching coordinator and the HoD. The department also has a teaching coordination group consisting of the teaching administration, the Head of Secretariat (HoS), the teaching coordinator and the HoD. The group meets quarterly to discuss various teaching-related matters, with DVIP matters being a fixed agenda item. Moreover, DVIP issues are regularly discussed at the quarterly department meetings that are prepared by the Department Forum.

On the department website we have a section dedicated only to our part-time teachers. One of the reasons for having that is that we have tried to gather all the practical information part-time teachers usually seek in one place, and thus make it easier for them to navigate their search, but also because we would like to inspire them to visit our Department's website more frequently. We will continue to develop the DVIP page on our website, as we will continually update the site according to the needs of our part-time teachers.

Recruitment and initial assessment

As per the CBS annual planning circle ECON is made aware of our teaching needs a few months before the semester start, once we start planning the staffing of our upcoming courses. In terms of courses ECON both maintains core courses and develops new courses to fulfil experimental interests or new needs. Depending on whether we establish new courses, or whether more classes have been added to our existing courses, we adjust as appropriate our hiring of new part time teachers. The scrutiny is done in collaboration between teaching administrators, course responsables, the Head of Department and the Deputy Head of Department, the latter being the department's academic teaching coordinator. The Head of Department ultimately makes the hiring decisions based on informed input.

We always first try to investigate whether some of our already hired and well-performing part-time teachers are available. If not, we will start the recruitment process of new part-time teachers. This is usually done by advertising a job opening on the CBS recruitment platforms as well as through ECON's social media and if possible, the personal social media of our faculty members (VIP). We also systematically make use of existing networks of our VIP and DVIP when reaching out to new potential part-time teachers.

Most of our part-time teachers are involved in exercise classes, with some exemptions, explained in the further text.

ECON assesses DVIP qualifications and offers support in the start phase of their employment. Normally, we first offer a teaching assistant (UA) position to the new employees, after which we might 'upgrade' them to EL position at the end of their term if their performance was satisfactory. In some cases, we directly offer an external lecturer (EL) position to the new employees, in consultation between administration, management and VIP. This is primarily done in cases when they hold a PhD, or if they have significant teaching experience from other universities.

In order to ensure quality of the teaching, DVIP's performance is monitored both by the course responsible the Head of Department (HoD) and the Deputy Head of Department (DHoD). The course responsible acts as the primary contact and offers support to DVIP in any potential issues related to the teaching. The HoD and DHoD assess the teaching evaluations each semester and in case of poor evaluations, appropriate measures are taken to address the problem.

Pedagogical competences and development

ECON currently has 25 external lecturers (EL) and 27 teaching assistants (UA). Nearly all of our EL are involved in teaching (either on Bachelor, Master or HD level), while three EL are hired primarily in order to supervise Master's thesis students. These external lecturers have participated in Master's Thesis supervision course and at the same time have years of experience in working with Master's Thesis students, primarily at our Graduate program, Applied Economics and Finance. ECON has also been granted exemption for three UA, who were selected based on their experience, i.e. the number of Master's Thesis they have supervised in the years prior to the exemption application, as well on the fact that they have participated in the Master's Thesis supervision course – their performance is monitored by the Thesis coordinators at ECON.

A core forum for discussing and developing pedagogical competencies at the department are the teachers' meetings. At these meetings, held by the course responsible, the content of the course and teaching methods are presented, critically discussed and put into action. Department does not have an official policy about mandatory meetings, but our experience shows us that DVIP do attend teacher's meetings, as it is highly relevant for their work. In case we see the change in this behavior, we will consider implementing official policy of mandatory participation in teacher's meetings.

Also, ECON is continuously encouraging and inviting DVIP to participate in conferences, inaugural lectures, and other relevant events hosted by ECON. At the same time, we are adding our DVIP to the mailing list that is used when sending all the invitations to our internal weekly seminars, held at the Department. Networking events where DVIP will have an opportunity to meet each other and the rest of the Department are in consideration.

ECON has requested all DVIPs to regularly send updated CVs to the Department's administration, so that the Department can monitor their professional development and academic activities. Through this process we can also be updated on any new teaching certificates DVIP might have required.

Several of our EL are actively participating in developing of the teaching material together with the internal course responsible (most notably on HD and bachelor programs). This process is being revised each year by the course responsible based on the experience/student feedback and evaluations from the previous years.

Furthermore, during the process of re-hiring DVIP, we request the DVIP to submit an updated CV, containing all the relevant courses they have taken in the period since they have been hired, which is reviewed together with their teaching evaluations. In combination, these inform our review of the competences and teaching outcomes of the DVIP and the potential take up new challenges or develop the teaching in a new direction. At the same time, we request all of our newly hired UA to participate in the 2 days mandatory module course, specially designed for UA and organized by CBS Teaching&Learning. This course addresses, among other things, different teaching methods and techniques. This also applies for the newly hired ELs, in case the person in question does not have previous experience or documented participation in a similar course.

In order to ensure the development of our part time teachers, we strive to keep a stable teaching staff, meaning that we ideally aim to keep the same part-time teachers in the same teaching positions at least a few years in a row. From our experience, this offers the stability and the chance for the part-time teacher to work on the same course and material a longer time, which will in return provide the teacher with more confidence and experience in the given field and thus increase the quality of the teaching. This is also evident in the student evaluations, as well as the experience of our course-coordinators, who clearly see the advantage of the stabile part-time teaching staff.

Academic development and integration in the research

As mentioned, ECON relies on EL and UA when it comes to teaching and exercise classes. This is most prominent in Bachelor micro- and macro courses, as well as HD course Economics (Samfundsøkonomi). In these cases a DVIP is primarily monitored by the course responsible, but also overseen by the academic teaching coordinator. DVIP involved in these courses are always invited to teacher's meetings at the beginning of the semester as described above. DVIP who assess written exams, for example at the HD course and bachelor courses, are also invited to the assessment meeting with external assessors, held at ECON, where the course responsible goes through the exam questions and solutions, and thus secures the consistent criteria for the assessment of the exam by all the assessors involved.

Even though ECON DVIP's primary contribution to the teaching and supervision at CBS lies in their experience from the professional sector, several of ECONs DVIP are also very active in research. These DVIP are usually also affiliated with other academic institutions as their primary place of employment, and few of them have also and continue to collaborate with ECON VIP. At the same time, some of our external lecturers are affiliated with our research centers, and they continue to contribute to our research and dissemination activities, through their network and experience in the public or private sector.