

Meeting on 27th June 2025, 15.30-18.00
The Danish Embassy in Beijing, China
57th meeting of the Danish Board of SDC

Minutes

Present: Rasmus Antoft (AAU), Helle Waagepetersen (SDU), Andreas de Neergaard (KU), Morten Frederiksen (RUC), Georg Dam Steffensen (ITU), Jakob Fritz Hansen (DTU), Søren Hvidkjær (CBS), Morten Laugesen (SDC)

Absent with notice: Kristine Kilså (AU)

Observers: Mikkel Leihardt (UFS), Mikkel Haarder (DI)

1. Approval of Agenda

The board approved the agenda but decided to start with item 3.

3. Economy: Briefing on Forecast 2 (2025); Approval of principles for compensation 2026; Approval of budget framework for 2026

Morten Laugesen presented the latest forecast for 2025. Due to the reduction in financial contribution from UFM (based on last year's financial result), the year-end deficit is expected to be slightly larger than budgeted. The board took note of the information.

The principles for compensation to Danish universities in 2026 remain unchanged from the principles approved by the board at the meeting in December 2024. The board approved the proposed principles for compensation in 2026.

Morten Laugesen presented the proposed budget framework for 2026 and informed that a final budget will be submitted to the board for approval in December. The financial framework allows for maintaining an academic activity level equivalent to that of 2025. A total of DKK 22.2 million is allocated for the initiation of new Ph.D. projects. The board approved the budget framework.

Georg Dam Steffensen pointed out that the government has set a goal to reallocate funds from administration to research and recommended that the SDC secretariat clarify with UFS whether the Danish part of SDC will also be affected.

2. Announcements from the SDC Director

Morten Laugesen informed the board about various issues of relevance for SDC:

Article in Weekendavisen

Morten Laugesen informed the board about the article in Weekendavisen and described how the thesis process typically proceeds for Danish and international students at SDC.

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The board emphasized the importance of not compromising academic freedom at SDC and ensuring that all students receive proper thesis supervision. Students who, for any reason, feel 'unsafe' during the thesis writing process should know where to address their concerns.

The board encouraged the SDC secretariat to clarify this to everyone involved in a thesis process, including the Danish thesis supervisor.

UCAS Rules and Regulations for International Students

Morten Laugesen informed the board about the recent meeting with UCAS where they informed that they will refrain from distributing the rule set to future cohorts of Danish and international SDC students.

Admissions 2025

Morten Laugesen presented the latest updated admission numbers for Danish and international SDC students for the 2025 cohort. Despite a record high number of applicants, the expectation is that the same number of students will be admitted in 2025 as in 2024.

In 2025, there are more international applicants than Danish applicants and many of the international applicants typically withdraw before the start of the program as they have to pay tuition fees.

The board took note of the information and concluded that there is a need to consider alternative and/or supplementary educational models to increase the number of Danish students. The board encouraged the SDC secretariat to collaborate with UFS to explore whether the reform of university education in Denmark allows SDC to organize new special educational offerings to attract Danish students for shorter stays than entire master's programs.

Mikkel Leihardt concluded by explaining UFS's efforts to ensure more flexibility for current and future cohorts of students within the existing legislative framework, including SU legislation.

JMC meeting and meeting material

Morten Laugesen presented the meeting materials with a special focus on the Industry Advisory Board (IAB), and the recently conducted SDC Graduate Employment Survey.

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The meeting materials suggest that JMC initially agrees to the Terms of Reference for IAB and that each party appoints three members – although they will not be presented and approved at the meeting itself. UCAS has proposed three names, all of whom have connections to CAS. Morten Laugesen informed the board about a few potential Danish candidates for IAB.

4. Any other business

Nothing

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