

## What to expect at Aalborg University

Studying at Aalborg University may be somewhat different from being a student at other Danish universities. This is due to the PBL method. To make sure everyone is on the same page, please read the short explanation of Aalborg University's PBL method below.

Our study programmes are essentially **package deals**. There isn't a course selection as such, as the semesters are pre-planned and stated in the curriculum. In the Choosing your study programme section below you'll find more information on how to find the different programmes.

Where other universities to a larger extent offer more electives so students can create their own unique academic course profile, students at Aalborg University build their academic profile via **the semester project**. The project is a free-topic subject (however it must fall under the theme of the semester) where the students, in groups, do research about a subject that interests them and they write a joint group report on it. It is through the semester projects each semester that the students can create their own unique academic profile, as they choose what to research. The project groups only last for the semester project. The next semester the students form new groups based on interest and thus the group one is in could be entirely, or only somewhat different the next semester.

**Each semester has a certain theme** and there is a planned learning outcome. To achieve the learning outcome there are certain theory modules that must be followed. Typically there are three theory modules (5 ECTS points each) which all are prerequisites for the project module (15 ECTS points). There is no set number of lectures for a given module. It follows our PBL setup (problem based learning) where the project module is a synthesis of the theory modules used on a real life problem. The learning outcome for the project is also found in the curriculum.

The project module has a threefold (or more) purpose; 1) Project group work strengthens the students' cooperation capabilities, 2) It requires students to reflect on their own learning – it must be argued how and why they used the taught theory in the project or why not if they didn't and why they chose to use a different theory, and 3) It helps students in transferring their knowledge into "how do I use this in the real world" as most often the group project will be undertaken in cooperation with a company, where the company presents a case/the problem to be solved/or is the data.

The illustration below shows how time is spent throughout a typical semester (with the semester start to the left). Most time in the beginning of the semester is used on courses/lectures but gradually that decreases and the project work increases. The project exam is an oral group exam where the project report is defended. See more here: <http://www.pbl.aau.dk/resources/films-about-group-exams/>

For more information on the PBL method:

[http://www.pbl.aau.dk/digitalAssets/126/126933\\_62747\\_problem\\_based\\_learning\\_aalborg\\_university.pdf](http://www.pbl.aau.dk/digitalAssets/126/126933_62747_problem_based_learning_aalborg_university.pdf)

## THE COURSE OF ONE SEMESTER



So the project report is like a very long essay, and it is not necessarily fun all the time – most likely it will be quite frustrating as there not only will be the academic troubles in learning new theories and learning how to apply them, but also the aspect of finding out how to work together in a group may prove to be frustrating. Afterwards, hopefully, you will discover that that is when you perhaps learned the most.

### Choosing your study programme

As mentioned in the section above our study programmes are essentially **package deals**, which means that there isn't a course selection as such. Semesters are pre-planned and as stated in the curriculum. Thus, it is not possible to mix and match courses from different programmes.

You can find the curriculum for each study programme on the study programme's website. Click your way to a specific study programme from the links below and then click on the link to the Curriculum (found on the right hand side of the study programme's webpage in the box "Facts about the programme").

Keeping the above in mind applicants can look for relevant teaching packages in the following ways:

Students currently pursuing a bachelor degree may look in our bachelor list:

<http://www.en.aau.dk/education/bachelor> and in the bachelor part of the guest & exchange list:

<http://www.en.aau.dk/education/guest-exchange>. The two lists differ in the way that the former has programmes fully taught in English, whereas programmes on the latter only have one or two English taught semesters. Therefore, only exchange students can apply for programmes on the latter list. However, as an exchange student, you do not need to limit yourself to the exchange list; you may also look through the full bachelor list.

Likewise, if you have already successfully completed your bachelor degree you may instead choose from the master programmes list: <http://www.en.aau.dk/education/master> or the master part of the guest & exchange list: <http://www.en.aau.dk/education/guest-exchange>.

Please note that some semesters have pre-requisites. E.g. to follow the 6<sup>th</sup> semester of Energy Engineering you need to have successfully completed the equivalent of 5 semesters of bachelor studies in a similar field. This should be apparent from the curricula.