

# Terms of Reference (ToR) for Employers' Panels at ITU

## Introduction

Danish universities are legally bound to set up one or more employers' panel(s) and ensure dialogue between the panel(s) and the university about the quality of the study programmes and their relevance for society.

IT University of Copenhagen has two types of Employers' Panels:

- One Executive-Level Employers' Panel and
- A number of Programme-Specific Employers' Panels.

The Executive-Level Employers' Panel discusses the overall portfolio of study programmes and other topics of general importance for all study programmes, whereas the Programme-Specific Employers' panels discuss the individual study programmes.

An updated list of panels and their associated study programmes is available on [www.itu.dk](http://www.itu.dk)

The list of study programmes covered by each Programme-Specific Employers' Panel is decided by Head of Education.

## Definitions

**Employer** (Danish: "aftager"): An organisation which employs ITU graduates or to whom one might reasonably expect ITU to deliver graduates.

**Employability profile:** ITU has the principle that every ITU graduate should acquire in-depth (and therefore difficult to replicate) skills or knowledge of long-term value through their studies which are in demand in the labour market.

## Executive-level Employers' Panel

### Purpose and Mandate

The overall purpose of the Executive-level Employers' Panel is to structure and strengthen the strategic dialogue between CEO-level managers of employers and the Executive Management of the university, which is necessary for the university to live up to its mission about delivering internationally leading teaching and research which enable Denmark to become exceptionally good at creating value with IT. The focus of the employers' panels is on education.

There are two main purposes of the Executive-Level Employers' Panel.

First, to further the relevance in ITU's portfolio of study programmes, the panel is to

- Shed light on the current state of the market for IT expertise in Denmark and share information about long-term trends in supply and demand in that market (and in segments of that market).
- Assess the overall portfolio of ITU's study programmes in the light of the perception of the market.
- Share knowledge about the work of the Programme-specific Employers' panels concerning changes in existing study programmes intended to minimise gaps between supply and demand.
- Discuss ideas or plans concerning new study programmes.

- Provide employers' input on research and disseminate information about new research results through ITU researchers.

Second, the Executive-Level Employers' Panel has the role of providing an employers' perspective in official proceedings that require such a perspective, e.g., institutional accreditation processes.

The ITU Board of Directors decides the strategy of the university, including where in the above-mentioned market ITU concentrates its efforts within education. However, Executive Management, who report to the ITU Board of Directors, are committed to using what transpires through the work in the Executive-Level Employers' Panel both in the day-to-day running of the university and in the formulation of proposals of strategy to the ITU Board of Directors.

## Composition and Appointment

The Executive-Level Employers' Panel consists of 7 to 11 members at CXO-level representing employer organisations. Both the private and the public sector must be represented.

Members of the Executive-Level Employers' Panel are appointed by Rector, who also appoints a Chair of the Executive-Level Employers' Panel among the members. Rector makes the appointments upon consultation with the Prorector and the Heads of Programme.

The Chair and members of the Executive-Level Employers' Panel are appointed for two years. The Chair and members can be re-appointed once. To ensure continuity in the panel and its' work, the entire panel should not be replaced at the same time.

In cases of premature replacements of panel members or the Chair, the Rector appoints a new member/Chair. Rector (or, in case of appointment of a new Chair: The Chair of the ITU Board of Directors), the Prorector and Head of Education are consulted. A new Chair can be recruited either from the remaining members or outside the panel.

There will be two ordinary meetings annually, one in the spring and one in the autumn. If needed, extraordinary meetings can be held. Rector and Head of Education represent ITU at the meetings, but they are not members of the panel. Minutes from the meetings are taken by the Assistant to the Executive Management and approved by the panel within four weeks after the meeting. The minutes are public information.

Two weeks prior to a scheduled meeting, an agenda will be distributed to the Executive-Level Employers' Panel. The agenda should include the following items:

1. Follow-up on previous recommendations
2. Report on the status of ITU study programmes (applications, admissions, employment, etc.)
3. Trends in the Market for IT Expertise; status of issues concerning alignment of supply and demand
4. Commendations and recommendations
5. Any other business.

The Executive-Level Employers' Panel members are honorary members and therefore not salaried.

Once a year, the Chair of the Executive-Level Employers' Panel submits a brief report to the ITU Board of Directors summarising the work of the panel and the interaction with the university. The report is public information.

# Programme-specific Employers' Panels

## Purpose

The overall purpose of a Programme-Specific Employers' Panel is to structure and strengthen the strategic dialogue between front-line managers in employer organisations and the management of the study programme(s) in question, which is necessary to maintain the quality and relevance of the programme(s).

The more concrete purposes of a Programme-Specific Employers' Panel are to:

- 1) Provide input in order for ITU to ensure the relevance of the study programmes e.g. by:
  - Sharing information about trends in supply and demand in the IT labour market in Denmark.
  - Assessing the study programmes covered by the panel in the light of the needs of the labour market.
  - Making recommendations intended to minimise gaps between supply and demand.
  - Assessing the employability profile every year.
- 2) Provide an employers' perspective in official proceedings when relevant, e.g., institutional accreditation processes, development of new study programmes and study programme revisions.

ITU works towards a close connection between panel members and ITU, and Heads of Programme can invite panel members to relevant events with students if and when appropriate.

## Mandate regarding curriculum

The Head of Programme makes recommendations concerning the curriculum to the Board of Studies, after consultation with the Programme-Specific Employers' Panel, colleagues and students. In accordance with the University Bill, Rector decides the curriculum based on recommendations of the Board of Studies. The Head of Programme is committed to consider input from the panel equally with other stakeholders. It is up to the Head of Programme which input to implement.

## Composition

A Programme-Specific Employers' Panel consists of an appropriate number of members (at least 7), who are front-line managers (managers who have experience with employing graduates) in employer organisations, alumnae or entrepreneurs. Both the private and the public sector must be represented. The size of each individual employers' panel is decided by the Head of Education.

The Employers' Panel members are honorary members and therefore not salaried.

## Recruitment and appointment

Members of a Programme-Specific Employers' Panel are appointed for two years with possibility for renewal. To ensure continuity in the panel and its' work, the entire panel should not be replaced at the same time.

The term for the Chair is two years with possibility for renewal.

Members of the Programme-Specific Employers' Panels are appointed by the Head of Education upon recommendation by the Heads of Programme.

The Head of Education appoints a Chair among the panel's members upon recommendation by the Heads of Programme.

An ITU employee who identifies a potential panel member for a Programme-Specific Employers' Panel only has a mandate to collect an expression of interest. The employee then presents the candidate's name and contact info to the Head of Education together with an articulated recommendation.

Each year, in May/June, the Head of Education initiates an assessment of the composition of each panel together with Heads of Programme and Programme Coordinator, to determine the need for recruitment, replacement, change of Chair, etc.

Recruitment and departure processes are started if necessary.

The Head of Education:

- Sends a welcome letter when new members have accepted,
- Sends a "thanks for your contribution" letter to departing members
- Communicates commitment and/or parting of members to Heads of Programme and Programme Coordinator.

## Meetings

There are usually two ordinary meetings annually, one in January and one in September. If needed, extra-ordinary meetings can be held.

Rector and Head of Communication Department are invited for the January meeting.

The September meeting can be organised as a workshop.

The agenda for the January meeting should include the following items:

1. Follow-up on previous recommendations
2. Report on the current status of the panel's study programmes (applications, admissions, employment, etc.)
3. Commendations and recommendations
4. The panel's annual report
5. Any other business

Head of Education and Heads of Programme for the study programmes covered by the panel represent ITU at the meetings, but they are not members of the panel.

Other staff members can participate as needed. Students can also be invited e.g. to share their perspectives or present their work.

ITU initiates the meetings. The agenda for the meeting is a joint responsibility of Heads of Programme and the Chair. On-boarding activities for new members are included as needed.

The panel can hold meetings outside ITU.

A staff member from Student Affairs and Programmes is secretary to the panel.

Two weeks prior to a scheduled meeting, ITU distributes an agenda to the panel. Minutes are sent to members for approval. The deadline for approval is 4 weeks after issuing.

The minutes are public information.

Once a year, the Chair submits a brief report to the secretary summarising the work of the panel, its recommendations, and the interaction with ITU including follow-up on recommendations. The report is part of the ITU quality assurance.

A report template is provided by ITU.

The report is not public information.