

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

## Introduction

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 Dean 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 the Vice Chancellor, who also appoints a Chairperson of the Executive-Level Employers' Panel among the members. The Vice Chancellor makes the appointments upon consultation with the department management and the Heads of study programmes.

The Chairperson and members of the Executive-Level Employers' Panel are appointed for two years. The Chairperson 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 Chairperson, the Vice Chancellor appoints a new member/Chairperson. The Chairperson (or, in case of appointment of a new Chairperson: The Chairperson of the ITU Board of Directors), the Heads of Department and the Head of Studies are consulted. A new Chairperson 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. The Vice Chancellor and the Dean 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 Chairperson 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 the 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 the 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. To this end, panel members should be invited to ITU Matchmaking and similar events as well as programme-specific events, e.g. student exhibitions or presentations and lab events.

## Mandate regarding curriculum

The Head of Study 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, the Vice Chancellor decides the curriculum based on recommendations of the Board of Studies. The Head of Study Programme is committed to consider input from the panel equally with other stakeholders. It is up to the Head of Study 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 Dean 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 once. To ensure continuity in the panel and its' work, the entire panel should not be replaced at the same time. The term for Chairperson is two years without possibilities for prolonging.

Members of the Programme-Specific Employers' Panel are appointed by Dean of Education, who also appoints a chairperson among the panel's members.

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

Every year, in May/June, Dean of Education, Heads of Study Programme and Programme Coordinator assess the panel's composition and the need for recruitment, replacement, change of Chairperson, etc. Recruitment and departure processes are started if necessary.

New panel members are recruited by Dean of Education, who invites them using a template containing links to further information. A new Chairperson can be recruited either from the remaining members or outside the panel.

Dean of Education

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

## Meetings

There are usually two ordinary meetings annually, one in January and one in September. If needed, extraordinary meetings can be held. The January meeting is attended by ITU management (e.g., Dean of Education, Head of Department, Executive Management or Head of Communication Department) while 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. Any other business.

The Head(s) of Study Programme represent(s) ITU at the meetings but is not member of the panel. Other staff members can participate as needed. Students can also be invited to e.g. share their perspectives or present their work.

The agenda for the meeting is a joint responsibility of Head(s) of Study Programme and the Chairperson. On-boarding activities for new members are included as needed. Catering and serving is flexible and thus requires attention from the organiser of the meeting. The panel can hold meetings outside the ITU. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to accept or deny suggestions for meetings outside ITU, taking into consideration the need for a clear ITU-profile in the panels' activities.

Two weeks prior to a scheduled meeting, ITU distributes an agenda to the panel. Minutes from the meetings are taken by a staff member from Student Affairs and Programmes and approved by the panel within four weeks after the meeting. The minutes are public information.

Once a year, the Chairperson of the Programme-Specific Employers' Panel submits a brief report to the Vice Chancellor, Dean of Education, Head(s) of Study Programme and Head of Department, cc the Chairperson of the Executive-Level Employers' Panel, summarising the work of the panel, its recommendations, and the

interaction with ITU including follow-up on recommendations. A report template is provided by ITU. The report is not public information.