



OECD PROJECT

SUPPORTING THE CONTRIBUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Setting strategic focus on our regional role in relation to the
change from industrial society to knowledge society

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PREAMBLE

The Aarhus School of Business (ASB) is a university which contributes added value to society through research, education and dialogue with external stakeholders on the creation and development of corporations and organisations. It is the ASB vision to continue to develop this profile as well as its international recognition by demonstrating excellent research results, internationally recognised graduates and fruitful cooperation with the corporate sector as well as society at large, notably the ASB socio-economic and professional environments.

About the ASB

The ASB is one of Denmark's 12 universities. It is an EQUIS accredited business school that ranges among the 5 largest EQUIS accredited institutions in Europe.

While the institution was officially founded in 1939, ASB history dates back to the 19th century and *Den Jyske Handelsskole* (The Jutland School of Trade).

The ASB has an annual budget of approximately DKK 320 million. There are 485 employees at the ASB. About 260 of these are scientific staff, including 35 professors and 60 PhD-students. In addition, the ASB employs approximately 700 part-time teachers.

The ASB has 5,545 bachelor and master students. Each year, approximately 400 of these students study abroad at a foreign university and the ASB receives about 300 international exchange students every year. Approximately, 600 international students participate in degree programmes.

1,781 follow part-time diploma- or master programmes.

2005 saw the emergence and consolidation of the new ASB organisation under the University Act of 2003.

The ASB today comprises 6 academic departments within the humanities and the social sciences:

- Department of Business Studies
- Department of Language and Business Communication
- Department of Economics
- Department of Law
- Department of Management and International Business
- Department of Marketing and Statistics

Research centres at the ASB include:

- Research on Customer Relations in the Food Sector (MAPP)
- Human Resources and Corporate Performance (CCP)
- Centre for Organisational Renewal and Evolution (CORE).

There are plans to establish 6 more centres within the next half year within the following research areas:

- Skill Formation, Qualifications and Career Development
- Internationalization of Business Law
- Lexicography
- Corporate Communication
- Logistics
- Financial Decision Making.

The ASB offers educational programmes within the areas of language and business communication and economics, business and management, including a wide portfolio of bachelor and master (candidatus) programmes in both Danish and English. Furthermore, the ASB offers Ph.D. programmes, part-time Diploma and Master programmes, and executive MBAs. The full-time programmes are organised in three-year bachelor programmes, two-year master programmes and three-year Ph.D. programmes

In November 2005 the University Board adopted the new 4-year ASB strategy. The following focus points are central to the 2006-2009 strategy:

- Increasing market focus
- Increasing business focus
- Focus on integrated internationalisation
- Clearer profiling of both research, education and dialogue
- Focus on high quality and efficiency in all activities
- Closer collaboration with other institutions
- Increasing focus on impact on employment rates and business sector developments
- Focus on our regional role in relation to the change from industrial society to knowledge society.

The special ASB profile positions the institution in a central role in the transition from an industrial society towards the knowledge-based society. The knowledge economy is characterised by a high degree of network organisation, innovation and creativity. In this development process, there is a need for people and knowledge that can create and develop networks as well as structures and systems that leave room for innovation and creativity. There is a need for people who follow and understand these development processes, who are able to transform the creative ideas into products, and who can develop business models that work. – The infrastructure of the knowledge society is networks, processes, communication and communication channels, accountability and evaluation measures. The engineers created the infrastructure of the industrial society. The ASB contributes to creating that of the knowledge society.

The writing of this report has been informed by the ASB's EQUIS self-assessment report (2004) and the ongoing strategy process (2005) as well as the OECD Report on The Response of Higher Education Institutions to Regional Needs (1999).

This first version of this ASB report was completed after a workshop was conducted in co-operation with Aarhus University on 22.09.2005. The participants at the workshop represented civil society as well as the private and public sectors in the region. This revised version was completed in March 2006.

1. CONTRIBUTION OF RESEARCH TO REGIONAL INNOVATION

As a research institution, the ASB does cater to the western part of the country (Jutland and Funen) and in particular to the East Jutland region; but research is per definition international, and the regional activities should be seen as fully integrated in the internationally recognised ASB research activities.

1.1 Responding to regional needs and demands

The corporate world in general is facing the challenges of globalisation, and the public sector in Denmark is currently undergoing major changes; it is therefore the responsibility of the ASB to assist private as well as public sector companies and organisations in equipping themselves to meet these challenges.

There are numerous examples of research that pertains to business areas that have a strong representation in the region. A case in point will be the *MAPP Centre*, i.e. Centre for Research on Customer Relations in the Food Sector. The *MAPP Centre* works to make Danish food companies more market oriented and has developed various instruments that aid food companies understand and relate to their markets; the centre disseminates knowledge to the food industry through courses, seminars and published articles in different types of journals. – In the City of Aarhus business development plan 2006-2009, a priority area will be innovation within the food sector and the establishment of a consortium focusing on healthy food products through the exploitation of nanotechnology, biotechnology and IT.

Further there is a small number of ASB professorships that have been sponsored by public or private organisations in order to encourage the development of and promote special areas of research.

Additionally ASB has recently decided that the *Center for Erhvervsforskning (Centre for Corporate Research)* is to form the future framework for ASB Tech-Trans activities.

The *Science and Enterprise Network (Forskerkontakten)* was launched by the universities in western Denmark in 2004. The overall mission is to promote networks between researchers and SMEs. The purpose is thus to strengthen the interaction between science and research organisations and businesses; to stimulate growth; and to increase the possibilities of establishing new research-based enterprises. The *Science and Enterprise Network* is part of the *Jysk-Fynske Erhvervssamarbejde*.

The *Jysk-Fynske Erhvervssamarbejde* is a co-operation network between the counties in western Denmark (Jutland and Funen). It is the aim of this network to function as a driver of regional development within four key areas, one of them being Research & Innovation. The ASB is actively involved in and has received funding for a number of projects within this framework, one of them being the *Science and Enterprise Network*.

An example of a project for which the ASB has received funding under the *Science and Enterprise Network* would be the windmill project: The objective of this project is to map current relations between contractors and sub-contractors in the windmill industry and subsequently offer consultancy on how these relations may be enhanced in order to ensure that the regional SMEs stay competitive in this rapidly expanding sector.

Another concrete example of the links between the ASB research community and the corporate world is the *MEDVID* project at the *Centre for Medical LSP*, which has also received funding from

the *Jysk-Fynske Erhvervssamarbejde*. The *MEDVID* project develops web-based knowledge-sharing tools that enhance professional communication within the health sector and the pharmaceutical industry.

A further example would be the *ASB Strategy Lab*, the focus of which is on strategic management, and especially on how traditional strategic planning can be supplemented with creative and innovative thinking on strategic innovation. The Strategy Lab has established close collaboration with a number of partners in the business community in order to study best practice and undertake action research and experiments concerning the best practice of the future. There is a range of major players in the Danish business community among this group; they also contribute financially to the project.

The *International Danish Entrepreneurial Academy* (IDEA) has been established to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in the whole country; the Mid-Jutland branch is located at the ASB. IDEA comprises three tracks:

- Development of entrepreneurship curricula at all Danish HEIs;
- Development of courses and advisory services for entrepreneurs;
- Development of company-based entrepreneurship (intrapreneurship).

IDEA has received funding from the Danish Ministry of Research, Technology and Innovation as well as from private sources. The Aarhus branch also co-operates with *Start & Vækst Erhvervsservice*, the county industrial service centre.

In addition to the examples quoted here, several other ASB researchers or research groups are involved in research or development projects at a regional level, be that as researchers proper or as consultants. The ASB in general, and its researchers in particular, thus take on the responsibility of conducting research that supports innovation and development in the region.

1.2 Framework conditions for promoting research and innovation

The recent initiatives to enhance technology transfer from the Danish universities, including the 2003 University act and the 2004 Act on Technology Transfer, etc. at Public Research Institutions, primarily regulate patents. The knowledge generated by ASB researchers within the humanities and social sciences is typically not covered by these laws, but is regulated by the Danish law on Intellectual Property Rights. The ASB is currently working on guidelines for ASB researchers in this respect and has taken steps to support the commercial transfer of ASB generated knowledge and technology (see box on ASB Innovation below).

Until very recently it has not been part of Danish culture in general that private organisations and enterprises should sponsor public research to any significant degree. It has been the responsibility of the government to allocate the resources generated via taxes to research (the annual appropriation act). This situation may change in the future; it can be foreseen, however, that the corporate world will be reluctant to make considerable financial contributions as long as they are as heavily taxed as it is currently the case in Denmark.

Press July 2005

The Tuborg Foundation grants DKK 4.5 million to ASB research projects

New research will provide companies with knowledge of the effects of internationalisation and globalisation on employment as well as wages and working conditions in Denmark

In which direction are Danish companies and their employees heading in an increasingly international and globalised world? To help find the answer to this question, the Tuborg Foundation has granted DKK 4.5 million to a four-year project at ASB's Center for Corporate Performance (CCP).

Internationalisation and globalisation

The research project is divided into four subprojects aimed at providing knowledge and instigating a debate on how a new framework for the Danish business sector is being created by the outsourcing of production to other countries, by multinationals acquiring companies or establishing themselves in Denmark, by Danish companies' possible recruitment of employees from different cultures as well as by factors such as job creation, job cuts or job changes.

Reasons for grant

It is important to CCP that its research results are communicated to companies and form part of the public debate. As such, CCP is a natural choice for the Tuborg Foundation whose primary goal is to support the development and implementation of initiatives and activities which are beneficial to society – and in particular to the Danish business sector.

ASB research is grounded in a philosophy that encompasses development and learning as well as problem solving. This basic idea contributes to the development of research *per se*, but just as importantly also to the development of the educational programmes and the ASB dialogue with its professional and socio-economic environments.

The ASB stimulates innovation and knowledge transfer to the corporate world in different ways:

- The educational programmes, primarily at *candidatus* (MA or MSc) level; ASB graduates thus enter the labour market with general academic and subject specific competences that reflect the state of the art within their specific areas of expertise (the research base);
- This also applies to the continuing education programmes at diploma and master levels;
- The ASB organises a large business conference every year with a special theme relevant to the business community (the 2005 conference was concerned with the challenges of globalisation); these conferences usually attract some 300 people, primarily from the regional business community.
- The ASB offers a range of short-term (from 1 day to a week) courses; the topics of these courses or seminars typically reflect new developments within a given research area and are targeted at a regional as well as a national audience. From 2006 this will also take the form of a University Summer School.

It goes for most of the ASB research centres and research groups that effective knowledge transfer is achieved through close cooperation with companies in the regional as well the national business community.

Knowledge and technology transfer

In 2006, the ASB founded a holding company designed to contain ASB spin-off companies as well as a project, called ASB Innovation, offering commercial services to other research institutions that need proof-of-concept assistance and/or strategic advice on the maturing and development of generic business concepts.

As for the former, the first ASB spin-off company will be a company emanating from the MEDVID project described in section 1.1 above. Until now MEDVID has developed web-based knowledge-sharing tools that enhance professional communication within the health sector and the pharmaceutical industry. However, the technology bears commercial potential in other professional sectors as well.

As for the business-strategic services offered to other institutions, these consultancy services will not only comprise advice from by ASB researchers, but also business-related analyses conducted by ASB master and doctoral students. Whereas master student involvement will mainly take the form of academically supervised internships, doctoral students will either utilize their knowledge as part of a Ph.D. industrial programme or disseminate the results of their Ph.D. project.

The ASB is also part of IT University West, a virtual university offering IT-related programmes. IT University West is a partnership of the four universities in the western part of the country (Jutland and Funen).

According to the Danish Act on Universities (2003), the ASB, like all other universities in Denmark, shall collaborate with society and contribute to the development of international collaboration. The university's scientific and educational findings should contribute to the further growth, welfare and development of society. As a central knowledge-based body and cultural repository, the university shall exchange knowledge and competencies with society and encourage its employees to take part in the public debate. The university shall contribute to ensuring that the most recent knowledge within relevant disciplines is made available to non-research oriented higher education.

The ASB fulfils these obligations in a number of different ways: It is considered important to cooperate with other HEIs both regionally, nationally, and internationally as well as to continue and further develop the ASB's fruitful dialogue with the corporate world and society at large. Some of the organisations and networks to which the ASB contributes, are listed in section 1.3 below.

Among other features, the ASB web site contains the *Find the Expert* service, including a link to the ASB research publication database. By means of a keyword search, the database instantly provides lists of publications and information on faculty; this function facilitates contact between ASB experts on the faculty and the ASB socio-economic and professional environments.

Approximately once a week, a newsletter is sent to the media and other constituencies with short news on developments and projects at the ASB. In this newsletter, open debate sessions and seminars of a non-academic nature are also advertised. ASB researchers are very active; on average they are quoted in the press much more than their colleagues at the other Danish universities.

Finally, ASB faculty have close links to the corporate community and are active as board members, knowledge disseminators and consultants.

1.3 Interfaces facilitating knowledge exploitation and transfer

The ASB is currently developing new guidelines for research contracts, collaboration, and consultancy. As regards IP transactions, cf. 1.2 above.

The ASB is represented in organisations and networks that commercialise the research base of the HE sector and promote technology transfer between the HEI and regional stakeholders.

Science Park Aarhus is the science park of the East Jutland region. Science Park Aarhus and its working partners specialise in assisting newly established companies with knowledge-intensive, high-tech and innovative products. There is a strong focus on the opportunities for networking through informal meetings and contacts; discussions between like-minded researchers and specialists from many different disciplines create fertile ground for innovative thinking and new ideas.

The *Alexandra Institute* is a unique collaboration effort within the IT area, where HEIs and visionary companies have pooled their competences in a limited company in order to strengthen research, development, knowledge sharing and educational programmes within the area of Information Technology.

The objective of *Udviklingsparken A/S* ("Development Park") is to enhance the entrepreneurial environment of ambitious new companies with a growth strategy; the internal and external networks of the *Udviklingsparken A/S* inspire and support the development of these new companies, and its staff function as sparring partners and problem solvers for the start-ups.

Østjysk Innovation A/S invests risk capital in new, innovative and especially research-related companies. They make knowledge, experience and administrative services available to the companies in which they invest; these efforts include courses, advisory services and exchange of information, etc. through collaboration with other key players on the market.

Conclusion

As it appears from the above sections, there are structures in place to support the contribution of research to regional innovation. It goes without saying that efforts may be further developed, but quite considerable results have been achieved, especially within the last decade.

The strong Danish economy definitely creates opportunities for the ASB; developments in the knowledge and experience economies depend on qualified contributions from the universities, and the ASB is gearing itself to enhancing the already existing links between the institution and its professional and socio-economic environments. This, however, is a market in which other universities also operate, and the ASB is very much aware of the increasing competition which, if not handled adequately, may prove to be a threat rather than an opportunity.

2. CONTRIBUTION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING TO LABOUR MARKET AND SKILLS

ASB education programmes must

- prepare students for their future roles and improve the students' opportunities on the labour market;
- focus on the importance of active citizenship in a democratic society;
- contribute to the personal development of students;
- enable the students to build and maintain a high level of knowledge.

2.1 Localising the learning process

The ASB programmes reflect the needs for competences and skills in the regional, national and international communities. The ASB has a clear standing as a higher education and research institution in the East Jutland region, and making this profile more visible to its stakeholders in a national and international context therefore has top priority. The idea behind this priority is the fact that ASB graduates should be geographically mobile and able to switch between functions and business sectors and thus be internationally recognised and able to function in the global business community. This philosophy also applies to the students who will eventually be based within the East Jutland region when they graduate.

The programmes therefore focus on developing the students' general and subject-specific academic competences as well as their personal, organisational and inter-cultural competences. It is important that these values are recognised and valued by the business community, and ASB programmes are therefore developed in co-operation with representatives from the business community and society in general. The ASB thus draws on the experience of its alumni and of advisory boards when developing new programmes or during major revisions of current programmes. These alumni and advisory board members are not necessarily based in the region; as a matter of fact, some of them are working or have worked abroad.

Programmes are designed so that students develop the ability to find solutions to concrete problems on the basis of a solid knowledge of relevant theory and methods as well as insight into their own competences and skills. By developing their sense of methodology, students are able to apply critical and constructive thinking to the problems at hand, also in the middle to long-term perspective after they graduate. When they learn how to learn, they are also able to enter into an independent life-long learning process geared to meet their needs at any given time in their careers.

Students typically come into contact with the corporate world in the region (or in the country) on several occasions during their courses of study. Course material, including cases, draws on examples from the business community; and the students come into direct contact with businesses that supply them with data for their project and dissertation work. In some of these instances, students interview members of staff for in-depth qualitative analyses or they conduct quantitative analyses in surveys. Others again solve concrete tasks for the companies and organisations about which they write. All students thus have the opportunity to apply their skills during their individual courses of study.

An example would be the *Billund Airport role play*, a one-day assignment at the Department of Language and Business Communication (spring semester 2005). As the topic of a so-called competence day, 1st year students were given a set of tasks involving information retrieval, foreign language proficiency, translation and personal communication. The CEO of a travel agency heard the students present the results of their day's work and presented the prize to the winning team. Days like these are integrated into the programmes in an effort to change the format of teaching

and learning and, again, help students apply the knowledge they have gained in (mock) real-life situations; cf. further in section 2.4 below on changing forms of educational provision.

Tailor-made courses and programmes are normally offered as continuing education (degree programmes or short-term in-service programmes). However, the BSc programme in Business and Law with special focus on tax rules and regulations is an example of a full-time degree programme that has been developed at the request of, and financially supported by, an ASB cooperation partner; in this case the Danish tax authorities (*Skat*).

As regards career service, the tradition has been to leave it to the relevant trade unions which in turn have had an office on the ASB premises. In recent years, however, the ASB has become a more active partner in the career service. This is primarily seen in the *Erhvervskontakten*, the *Business Contact* section of the ASB web site targeted towards the students and a similar one targeted towards the corporate world. These sections of the web site contains links to

- Internships and projects
- Scholarships
- Job bank / CV bank (the business community posting job advertisements; the students/graduates posting their CVs)
- *Center for Entrepreneurship*
- Career service

Some of these initiatives are run in co-operation with Aarhus University and/or the Students Union, and the site is co-sponsored by the two trade unions most relevant to ASB graduates.

Projektzone.dk is financially supported by the County of Aarhus and the Danish Ministry of Research, Technology and Innovation; *Unipraktik.dk* is an initiative to promote internships in the whole region, i.e. also outside the city of Aarhus, and is sponsored by the *Jysk-Fynske Erhvervssamarbejde*, cf. 1.1 above. This is especially important because internships often pave the way for a subsequent job offer to the student when s/he graduates, also in organisations that do not always have a tradition for employing academically trained staff.

The *Centre for Entrepreneurship* is a collaborative effort between four local HEIs, the City of Aarhus and the County of Aarhus. The centre was inaugurated in 2003, and its aim is to contribute to the development of an innovative entrepreneurial culture in the East Jutland region; to increase the number of knowledge-based entrepreneurs and projects; to strengthen the entrepreneurial spirit and culture at the HEIs, and to contribute to the establishment of closer links between relevant constituencies. The centre organises courses, seminars, and events; it provides support for entrepreneurs and co-ordinates a number of student projects from the various institutional partners to enhance cross-disciplinary knowledge sharing.

A concrete example of this would be a BSc elective: *Cross Institutional Project (Tværinstitutionelt Projekt; TIP)*. A *TIP* brings together in project teams students of engineering, architecture and business to define, test and develop a product concept of their own choice. This is a good example of cross-functional teamwork and co-operation that is very close to a real-life situation. The learning processes in these projects are oriented both towards the application of knowledge and of balancing the business administration focus with other functional aspects.

In this context, *IDEA* should also be mentioned; cf. section 1.1.

While studying at the ASB, most students live in Aarhus itself or in the county of Aarhus. Danish universities typically do not have a wide variety of on-campus extracurricular activities; instead, students participate in sports activities, cultural events, etc. in the city or the region. There are, however, both on-campus activities and local initiatives. Many students are involved in one or more

of the associations under the umbrella of *Studentterlauget* (the ASB Students Union) or *Studenterhus Aarhus* (Student House Aarhus), a centrally located venue in the city of Aarhus for Danish and international students, the business community and cultural activities.

It is part of the strategy of the city of Aarhus to support initiatives that strengthen Aarhus as a city of (international) education. Again the focus is on reaching outside the region rather than focus on co-operation within the region itself as this is already relatively well established.

The ASB finds extra-curricular activities valuable to the individual student and his or her personal development, but there are no mechanisms in place to monitor and accredit such activities, and the ASB does not plan to do so as part of its strategy for the coming five years.

An example of postgraduate activities would be Ph.D. students applying their area of expertise to a specific real-world setting or generating data from the corporate world for their theses. Some of these Ph.D. students participate in the Ph.D. industrial programme, in which the business or organisation in question contributes financially to the student's monthly grant and an overhead to the ASB.

The ASB is a member and active partner in the regional and national Innovation Councils (*Innovationsråd*).

2.2 Student recruitment and regional employment

Students in Denmark apply to HEIs through a central agency (*Den Koordinerede Tilmelding; KOT*). They must indicate a list of priorities in their applications and are then subsequently offered a study place by one or more universities. The ASB has had a tradition for catering primarily to the East Jutland region; in recent years, however, efforts have been made to attract students from the whole country and from abroad. The ASB 2006-2009 strategy will focus on adding another 40 per cent to the student population, the majority of these coming from outside the East Jutland region.

There is a clear regional supply chain. Today, the ASB full degree programmes are primarily advertised in the western part of the country. Student counsellors tour the relevant upper-secondary institutions, informing the 16-19 year olds about their opportunities at the ASB. The ASB is represented at study fairs; future extension of these efforts will be outside the region, nationally and internationally, in accordance with the strategy for the coming 5-year period.

U-DAYS is a joint effort of 26 HEIs in Aarhus. Its aim is to give prospective students between 19 and 24 years of age a two-day taste of student life at the HEI of their dreams – and of Aarhus. In 2006, the ASB and the University of Aarhus offered free transport in special U-DAYS busses to students at the relevant upper-secondary institutions of the region. 1.500 young people visited the ASB during U-DAYS in March 2006.

Apart from the list of initiatives mentioned under 2.1 above, students/recent graduates and regional companies have the opportunity to meet at two annual events: *Krydsfelt* is a new local initiative. The event is organised jointly by *Studentterlauget* (the ASB Students Union) and *Studenterhus Aarhus*. *Karrieredage* ("career days") are organised by a private agency in collaboration with AIESEC. This is a national event (fair) that travels to all universities and also makes a stop at the ASB for two days every year.

Press October 2005

Danish Prime Minister visits Projektzone.dk

On Thursday afternoon, Anders Fogh made an unannounced visit to Projektzone.dk and was introduced to the two project consultants, Mads Ellegaard and Rasmus Jacobsen, and to what Aarhus does to establish contact between the students and the business community.

Positive evaluation of the first year

On the basis of an extensive survey, it has been established that the two target groups are very positive towards Projektzone.dk.

The evaluation shows that:

- 391 companies have created a profile for themselves
- 500 trainee positions and 160 cooperation projects have been advertised
- In one year, projektzone.dk has had 50,000 visitors and 570,000 page views
- There are currently about 280 unique visitors every day
- Each profile has been viewed between 50 and 2,000 times
- Each advertisement has been viewed an average of 200 times
- 25% of students have visited projektzone.dk more than 20 times
- Companies are very satisfied with the cooperation

All the companies (100%) have been happy or very happy with the students and their qualifications. 89% of the companies now have a more positive view of academic staff, and 92% feel to some extent or to a high extent that the students have contributed positively to the development of the company.

- The evaluation shows that the project has helped break down the barriers to employing academics, and consequently we can see Projektzone.dk as an important element in creating regional growth, says Pernille Kallehave, Team Manager for Communication and External Relations at ASB and head of Projektzone.dk.

The ASB has not had a tradition for monitoring the flow of graduates into the labour market. In recent years, however, an alumni database has been established. It should be noted that not all alumni are listed there, but the graduating classes of the last few years have all been entered into the database. No systematic analysis of their career paths has yet been conducted. The trade unions organising the majority of ASB graduates have made such surveys and have shared their results with the ASB on several occasions in the past when the university has needed this kind of data.

The ASB is currently mending its ways and is in the process of establishing such systematic analyses within the auspices of ASB Alumni and the ASB Career Centre. As regards graduate enterprises, please see sections 1.3 and 2.1 above.

The ASB Career Center

As of January 2006, the Business Contact mentioned above is partly supported, partly substituted by systematic and encompassing career and recruitment services within the new ASB Career Centre. The purpose of the centre is to

- offer concrete career as well as placement services to bachelor and master students as well as recent graduates, i.e. student jobs, project collaboration, internships, and regular jobs;
- offer 'one-entrance' recruitment services to private and public companies against the backdrop of formalized corporate partnerships;
- facilitate and promote in-depth business-student relation-building through the integration of business in the teaching environment.

It is the ground-breaking ambition of the ASB Career Centre to provide an attractive, hospitable and tangible physical environment for student-business interaction. With its on-campus location in close proximity to student counselling facilities, the ASB Career Centre will open its doors on 1 September 2006, featuring a career café, state-of-the-art meeting facilities and back offices.

It is constitutive to the concept behind the ASB Career Centre that students, teachers, and companies form an integral common-interest relationship. Therefore, the ASB Career Centre develops its services in close dialogue with three affiliated advisory boards:

- Student Advisory Board
- Academic Advisory Board
- Business Advisory Board.

2.3 Promoting life-long learning, continuing performance development and training

The ASB has an *Executive Education Centre (Efter- & Videreuddannelsescentret; EVC)* that forms the gateway to diploma and master level programmes, short-term brush-up courses, seminars, conferences and tailor-made courses within the ASB areas of expertise. Programmes attract participants from all over the country, but especially as regards the diploma programmes, the majority of students come from the East Jutland region.

Several master programmes are offered in collaboration with one or more other universities in the region; this is done to pool areas of expertise in a market with a limited volume of students interested in very specialised programmes. The ASB also offers continuing education (master) programmes within the auspices of IT University West.

The ASB has offered a two-week intensive summer school to international MBA students for a number of years. The summer school is organised by a consortium of leading business schools from across the world. In the strategy for 2006-2009 it is foreseen that the ASB is to further develop its summer school activities. Thus, the ASB will now host a new Summer University for Danish and international Master students within the main area of economics as well as both the Essam MBA Summer School and the IED Summer School on International Entrepreneurship Development in the Summer of 2006. In addition, also in the Summer of 2006, the ASB, in collaboration with the University of Aarhus, will host the new Summer School of the Universities.

The continuing education programmes are open to all qualified students, but ASB alumni get a discount on some tuition fees.

There are no special mechanisms in place at the ASB to increase access to learners who have been traditionally under-represented in HE. There are instances of ad hoc initiatives, however, and at least one of special interest to the overall topic of this report: In the autumn of 2005, the ASB was involved in a 6 month project, *Innovation Agents*. The target group was unemployed artists, designers, architects and humanities graduates; they did not get paid, but travel expenses incurred while they participated in the project, were covered. The overall objective was to create new permanent jobs in companies in East Jutland. The programme, financially supported by the European Social Fund, was organised by a private agency, but it was designed by ASB faculty. It comprised a short on-site course followed by placement in businesses and organisations where the Innovation Agents were supposed to contribute to relevant change processes.

2.4 Changing forms of educational provision

The ASB has an advanced campus-wide Intranet that also functions as the platform for e-learning. Electronic messages to students, course descriptions, time tables, participants lists, e-mail function, discussion fora and file sharing facilities, etc. in the *CampusNet* have vastly increased the exploitation of new technologies in the development of new modes of teaching and learning. Many teachers now engage in blended learning, not necessarily following the tradition of on-site instruction at a specific time every week. Others use the facilities for courses or course modules taught exclusively online.

As a matter of fact, at some departments, a large number of teachers have worked with new modes of teaching and learning in recent years, this also involves taking into consideration the learning styles of individual students and thereby increasing the students' awareness of their learning processes. While these initiatives have been supported in the departments in question, they are not yet considered part of an institution-wide policy.

These new developments apply to the full time programmes at bachelor and *candidatus* (MA & MSc) levels as well as to the executive education programmes. Most of the latter are taught as regular distance-learning programmes with one or two intensive seminars of a few days per semester (master level courses); some graduate diploma courses are taught along similar lines in that students only meet with their teachers every or every other Saturday.

The ASB has not registered any serious tensions between place-based and virtual forms of educational provision. However, obviously, we cannot evaluate what we do not see; so far no surveys have been conducted to throw light on this issue.

Apart from consultation with individual students or small groups of students, which typically takes place at the teacher's office, all lectures / classes are held at the main campus on *Fuglesangs Alle* in Aarhus. The ASB has two more venues close by; these are almost exclusively used for department offices.

2.5 Enhancing the regional learning system

The East Jutland region as a whole, and in particular the greater Aarhus area, has educational institutions at all levels from kindergarten to university level. The city of Aarhus has the highest percentage of young people between 17-24 years of age in the whole country; and 12 out of 100 inhabitants in Aarhus are students. The city considers this a strength as it contributes to attracting knowledge-based enterprises to the area (which in turn is good for the local economy); there is therefore a policy to maintain and further develop this advantageous position in collaboration with the educational institutions, including the HEIs that are already there.

No general data analysis has been carried out to establish the demand and supply of different types of higher education within the region. The ASB will conduct a competitor analysis when programmes undergo major revisions, or when new programmes are proposed.

The ASB student population is very regional at present: Almost half of the first-year students come from the greater Aarhus area, and more than 90 percent from Jutland and Funen. The ASB policy is now to focus on attracting more students from the Zealand / Copenhagen area as well as from abroad.

Regional collaboration between HEI's takes place on a voluntary basis. As for the whole Jutland-Funen region, the IT University West is a case in point. Furthermore there are bilateral agreements between e.g. Aarhus University and the ASB. University students may complete modules at the ASB and vice versa and obtain full credit transfer, and the two universities offer a joint degree in Arabic and Communication. In collaboration, the ASB and the University of Southern Denmark offer a Master in IT, Communication, and Organisation (*ITKO*) and its MBA equivalent *MITKO*.

An example of a hierarchical educational collaboration would be the agreement between the Aarhus Commercial College and the ASB to accept students with a 2-year HE degree on ASB bachelor programmes. It is part of the ASB strategy for 2006-2009 to establish further mutually binding partnerships, including the development of bi- or multi-lateral agreements as the ones mentioned here.

From the 2005-2006 academic year, the ASB is a member of and contributes to the Danish University Extension (*Folkeuniversitetet*). This new initiative contributes to the ASB visibility among and co-operation with people in the region outside the immediate HE sector.

2.6 Conclusion

Major innovation of programmes involves thorough understanding of the corporate world and its competence needs, including both hard and soft skills, in order to ensure corporate relevance and the employability of graduates. As it appears from the above sections, the ASB keeps this as a top priority in its development of programmes.

There are informal and formal mechanisms and structures in place to continue to develop co-operation between the HEIs, between the HEIs and the non-HEI sector as well as other regional stakeholders; and it is part of the ASB strategy for the coming five years to maintain and extend such collaboration. It should be noted in this connection, however, that this is a two way responsibility that takes it for granted that the corporate sector is also able and willing to extend its co-operation with the HE sector.

The ASB strength is a well developed research base for the programmes offered. As was the case in relation to research, senior staff is a scarce resource, and it is therefore the ASB policy to attract more faculty in order to have the sufficient and necessary human resources to carry out the development planned.

The opportunities for attracting more students both nationally and internationally are there; the same goes for other HEIs, and there is now a much stronger competition between HEIs as regards attracting the best qualified students from the whole country and from abroad. This also applies to students in the region who have the opportunity to study somewhere else in the country or even abroad if they so wish.

3. CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Social development

The ASB as an institution does not provide community access facilities or expertise support for health, social or other services; individual members of faculty may function as experts or offer pro bono voluntary services outside the official auspices of the institution. The ASB contribution to society in this respect is limited to the ASB students who all have access to student counsellors and the university chaplain.

The International Office has special measures in place for the ASB international students, including a crisis plan to assist students in cases of emergency.

Alumni relations at ASB: ASB Alumni – connecting friends and knowledge

ASB Alumni has existed since autumn 2002 and currently counts more than 1,500 members. It is organisationally attached to the Team Communication and External Relations, but its activities are coordinated by a steering committee with participants from the entire ASB organisation as well as from *Studenterlauget*, the ASB student union.

Until now, communication with alumni has mainly been through one-way channels, and the principal offer for alumni has been miscellaneous forms of information services. However, ASB Alumni is being developed into a network of competences and friendship for former students – potentially counting more than 20,000 people.

The launch of a password protected member site in the spring of 2006 will allow for the gathering of more information about ASB alumni and their ASB-related needs and thus also facilitate the development of new and relevant services – particularly within continuing education and career development. The member site is also meant to be used for networking purposes. It will enable alumni to keep in touch with former fellow students and build relationships with other alumni as well as ASB researchers through professional and social interest groups.

It goes without saying that ASB Alumni activities are bilingual and target Danish speaking as well as English speaking people. We give high priority to our foreign alumni in order to allow the network to grow across borders.

3.2 Cultural development

Under the umbrella of *Studenterlauget* (The Students Union) students have access to 25 different organisations / associations, e.g. *AsbSport*, which allows them to participate in team sports at affordable prices. The different sports clubs are all off campus.

There is a fitness centre on the premises to which staff and students have access at a very reasonable price.

ASB is a formal partner and member of the board of *Studenterhus Aarhus*, whose activities range from culinary and artistic events to the annual Knowledge Festival (*Videnfestival*), all of which are open to the general public. *Studenterhus Aarhus* was recently merged with the International

Student Centre in Aarhus at which the ASB is also both a formal partner and member of the board. *Stuenterhus Aarhus* is also the location of the immensely popular and successful *Virksomhedsdating* (Company Dating), where approximately 30 companies – local, regional, and national – and 100 students meet each other on an evening of to-the-point, no-nonsense 3-minute dating sessions.

3.3 Environmental Sustainability

Apart from general technical measures to save on heating, electricity and water, the ASB campus cannot be said to be a practical demonstration of best practice as regards environmental issues of concern to the regional community.

There are no joint initiatives between the university, the regional community and others to demonstrate environmental sustainability possibilities for the region.

3.4 Conclusion

As regards the topics covered in this part of the report, the ASB contribution to community is limited.

4. CAPACITY BUILDING FOR REGIONAL CO-OPERATION

4.1 Mechanisms to promote HEI-regional involvement

As it appears from sections 1 and 2 above, there is actually quite a lot of formal as well as informal collaboration between the HEIs and the region as regards education and research. Most of this is localised in different areas of the Jutland-Funen region; what has been described above pertains primarily to the greater Aarhus area or the East Jutland region in which the city as well as the county plays a major role. Initiatives have come both from within and outside the HEIs, and funding has come from national and regional sources as well as the corporate sector.

National and regional audits have been carried out to map the knowledge resources in the region (Jutland-Funen). This will be dealt with in the synthesis report.

The *Jysk-Fynsk Erhvervssamarbejde* mentioned in section 1.1 is the strongest example of collaboration between the counties in the western part of the country in order to promote innovation and capacity building in the whole region. These measures should be seen as a reaction to what is considered the national political focus on the Copenhagen metropolitan area.

Press September 2005

Strengthening of career guidance and alumni network

A grant of DKK 1.5 million from regional funding allows ASB to establish a career centre and develop alumni network

Career guidance is an important issue on the education-political agenda, and at ASB half of a grant of DKK 1.5 million will be used to strengthen exactly this area.

- The career centre will provide students with advice and guidance on traineeships, student jobs and their first jobs, and naturally we hope that this will promote awareness and make students think more about their future jobs and careers at an early stage of their studies. It will also provide specific help to companies wishing to contact and recruit students, says Pernille Kallehave, Team Manager for Team for communication and external relations at ASB.

Former students are important partners

At the end of 2002, ASB established the Alumni Club and the last half of the grant will be used to further develop this network and to strengthen relations with former ASB students.

- Closer contacts with former students have many advantages in connection with e.g. career guidance, and at the same time alumni are obvious network agents within the companies, Project Manager for the Alumni Project, Jacob Jensen, explains.

Both projects will be developed in close cooperation with the relevant parties, both internally and externally.

As regards local governance, Denmark is currently undergoing a major reform process. As of 1 January 2007, five regions in Denmark will replace the present counties. It must be taken for granted that, at that time, a strategic plan for the individual regions will comprise the role of the HEIs. In this context there is no doubt that Aarhus will be considered the regional centre of higher education and research, but a centre with clear responsibilities towards the other parts of the region.

IDEA (as described in 1.1) is a good example of funding made available to the HEIs by the government to support regional engagement.

The community will access the ASB Library and make use of its external services.

4.2 Promoting regional dialogue & Joint marketing initiatives

The ASB leadership team and individual members of faculty and staff are active in organisations, networks, working groups, etc. in which they represent the ASB and its interest in the greater Aarhus area and the East Jutland region as a whole. This pertains to the corporate sector as well as to local and regional government. As a consequence of this, there is an ongoing dialogue between the ASB and its external stakeholders despite the lack of more formal measures. This may be due to the fact that Denmark and Danish culture generally has a very flat hierarchical structure as compared to most other countries, and co-operation often takes place in informal networks. This is very much due to the fact that Danish culture is a so-called low-context culture.

ASB staff and faculty representation in public and private bodies in the region is not systematically monitored. However, a recent survey, limited in scope, revealed that such representation is quite extensive.

According to the Danish University Act, the University Board is the highest authority of the university. The Board shall safeguard the university's interests as an educational and research institution and determine guidelines for its organisation, long-term activities and development (§10). The majority of the Board members (in the case of the ASB, six people) represent the corporate world and society outside the business school.

The city of Aarhus promotes the greater Aarhus area and Aarhus itself as a city of education in collaboration with all HEIs. ASB professor Finn Frandsen is a member of the branding group founded by the mayor of Aarhus and working with the overall branding strategy for the city of Aarhus.

ASB also participates in the Press Guide, a network aiming to promote research and knowledge developed by the Aarhus HEIs.

Promotion of the ASB and its programmes is done by the ASB, part of it at e.g. fairs where all HEIs promote themselves to students at upper-secondary institutions.

The ASB is an active partner in and contributes to *U-Days*, a project promoting Aarhus as the number one Danish city of education.

There is no "buy local" purchasing programme; however, there are national measures in place for state institutions to pay the lowest possible prices for the goods and services that they purchase.

4.3 Evaluating and mapping the impact of the regional HE system

There does not seem to be any audits of the impacts of HEI links with the region. It is taken for granted.

4.4 Institutional capacity building for regional involvement

The ASB 2006-2009 strategy focuses on the ASB role in connection with regional development. The ASB management team has initiated a number of initiatives to build relations to regional partners such as other HEIs, to upper-secondary institutions and to the business community.

The ASB Dean of Research, Hanne Harmsen and professor Nina Smith have been appointed to a working group appointed by the mayor of Aarhus to develop a set of ideas on how Aarhus should contribute to the process of globalisation.

The ASB Dean of Education, Peder Østergaard is chairman of the board of a local upper-secondary institution and is now building relations to the whole sector of upper-secondary institutions in the region. A focus point in this relationship will be continuing education of the teachers at this level and exchange of data to bridge existing gaps and support the development of education at all levels in the region.

To support the regional focus in the strategy, ASB has established a new team called Team for Communication and External Relations headed by the Rector Børge Obel. This team will support the building of relations, the upstart of projects, the creation of communication platforms and the development of a new support organisation to ensure the dissemination of research and employment of ASB graduates in the region.

4.5 Human and financial resources management

There is a clear strategy to attract faculty and staff that can contribute to enhancing the international as well as the regional profile of the institution. As explained in the preamble and section 1 of this report, this is seen as a necessary prerequisite if the ASB research and education programmes are to have an impact at the regional level; the future of the regional businesses and organisations depend on this international perspective if they are to maintain and develop their position in an ever more globalised economy.

National funding streams are managed in the general ASB budget. Regional funds are earmarked for specific projects and may therefore, depending on the nature of the project, be handled at central or de-central (departmental) level.

4.6 Creating a new organisational culture

As already mentioned, the ASB strategic plan focuses on enhancing both the international and the regional dimension of the institution.

While regional engagement is part of the ASB mission, the vision for the future focuses on the internationalisation process and what this will also contribute to the region at a time of rapid globalisation.

The implementation of the new ASB strategy will mean the creation of a new outgoing and dynamic culture embracing the whole region.

5. CONCLUSIONS: MOVING BEYOND THE SELF-EVALUATION

The ASB has drawn on other self-evaluation processes, notably the report prepared for the 2004 EQUIS accreditation of the business school and the 2005 strategy process. As a consequence of this, the process leading to this report has by and large been limited to collecting already existing data.

It is the general view of the ASB leadership team, however, that self-evaluation and external peer review are valuable tools in the development of the institution's policies and practices.

The ASB international mindset is a prerequisite for gratifying the needs and demands in the ASB socio-economic and professional environments, also at the regional level. Research projects are by definition informed by the international research community, and by ensuring the international dimension also in the educational programmes, the ASB equips its graduates to meet the challenges in the world of work and contributes to corporate and organisational development at regional as well as national and international levels.