



AAU PBL Academy – Annual Report 2020

Introduction

2020 has been a year of dramatic changes for PBL at AAU. In the beginning of March 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic infiltrated and impacted our teaching and the student's project work. New formats of PBL were developed by teachers and researchers – many of the principles for high quality teaching were transformed into digital online sessions. In addition, the student's developed new ways of working together in their groups and with their external partners. At our PBL Academy seminar in August, colleagues from across the university shared their ideas on how to design for a hybrid study start, and we supported each other in finding new solutions for welcoming the new students.

Many of the events we had planned in the PBL Academy were postponed into 2021. With this report we also present a new format for seminars in the PBL Academy – a format that will run on a bi-monthly basis and hopefully establish a vibrant community for PBL.

2020 was also the first year with the new progressive PBL intended learning goals in all study regulations. The integration of the PBL learning goals has been a focus for a longer period of time and we are looking forward to seeing the results of this work. In the PBL Academy we are currently analyzing the ways the intended learning goals for PBL have been implemented across all study regulations.

2020 was also the year where the Faculty of Social Sciences (SAMF) appointed a new member, Nikolaj Stegeager, to the PBL Academy. We would like to thank Erik Laursen for his efforts in the PBL Academy as a representative for SAMF, and wish him the best of luck in with his retirement. The Faculty of Medicine (MED) also appointed a new member, Patrik Kjærdsdam Telléus, to the PBL Academy. Patrik is also the editor in chief of the Journal of PBL in Higher Education. We would like to thank Diana Stentoft for her tireless efforts in the area of PBL, and wish her the best of luck with the new position outside the university.

Below you can find short elaborations of key activities for the PBL Academy in 2020. However, it is important also to underscore the strategic and academic work of the Academy which serves to support the work and directions of PBL in each of the five faculties and different pedagogical centres at AAU. Thus, the PBL Academy continuously makes an effort to ensure that PBL at AAU continues to develop within the framework of our 6 PBL principles. The PBL Academy had eleven board meetings in 2020.

1. Journal of PBL in Higher Education

In 2020 the Journal of PBL in Higher Education has published two issues. One special issue and the annual regular issue. Our regular issue had 5 papers and 4 cases, which we consider to be a satisfactory amount. Our strategy to decrease the localness of the journal and increase the international representation is visible in the authors and reviewers the journal included in 2020, and will be pursued further in the coming years.



In 2020 we have started the process to increase the journal's visibility in relevant search engines and databases. This work continues in 2021. We also strive to increase the research impact of the journal, and hope to attract new and well qualified authors, e.g. by special invites and focussed lobbying.

The editorial team has seen some changes in 2020. Patrik Kjærdsdam Telléus has become editor-in-chief, and two new members, Lykke Brogaard Bertel and Nikolaj Stegeager, have joined the team.

2. PBL learning objectives in all educations (gennemgang af st.ordninger)

In 2019, the PBL Academy supported the development of intended learning outcomes (ILOs) for PBL throughout the curriculum within the frame that the Academy developed in late 2018 – defining PBL competences in four categories:

- **Problem oriented competences** to identify, analyse, formulate and address authentic problems in an exemplary way.
- **Interpersonal competences**, recognising that most authentic problems professionally mostly are addressed and solved in collaboration.
- **Structural competences**, as problem based work have to be carefully organised due to its complex and unforeseen nature – project management is central.
- **Meta-cognitive competences**, enabling students to work problem based with the development of PBL competences and in a life long learning perspective can analyse and develop those competences in a qualified way.

The idea of creating a framework was to place the ownership of the ILOs for PBL at programme level, and guide study-boards by request. After the integration of the ILOs, the PBL Academy is now collecting and analyzing all study regulations. The goal of the analysis is to get an overview of the ILOs across all educations, and hopefully this work can support future revisions of the study regulations. In 2021 a final catalogue will be presented at our website and we also hope to provide a tool for searching for specific learning goals in relation to the four categories.

3. Communication about PBL at AAU

The PBL Academy is still working with producing films about the principles of AAU-PBL, but due to COVID-19 we have postponed the work until 2021. You can already find films on the principles: [How courses support the project work](#) and [How problems direct student's learning process](#).



4. A new format for our seminars

Based in dialogues with our colleagues across the faculties, we have decided to create a new format for our seminars. Instead of hosting 2-4 seminars a year, we will now be hosting shorter seminars on a regular basis. These seminars will be designed to stimulate dialogue and inspiration between the participants. Until further notice the seminars will be online in the afternoon. Our experiences with hosting the online seminar “Study start under Covid-19” were positive, and we saw a lot of new faces joining the seminar.

As a part of the focus on digitally supported PBL, the PBL Academy has started working together with the Center for Digitally Supported Learning at AAU. We hope that the PBL Academy can qualify the focus on digitally supported PBL.

6. Looking ahead

Early 2021, we received the news about the establishment of the new “Institute of Advanced Studies in PBL”. The PBL Academy welcomes this new institute and see it as a very positive sign of the future of PBL at AAU. We hope to contribute towards the development of the new institute, and we strongly believe that our experiences with being a cross faculty academy can provide a basis for the future of PBL at AAU.

Members of the PBL Academy:

Jacob Davidsen (Chairman) Jette Holgaard Lykke Brogaard Bertel Patrik Kjærdsdam Telléus Nikolaj Stegeager