

## **Guidelines for the procedure for appointing Associate Professors (Docents)\***

**Adopted by the Faculty Board of Social Sciences on 9 March 2016**

### **1. General information**

The Faculty Board of the Social Sciences will appoint a person as Associate Professor (Docent) who has a doctoral degree or the equivalent scientific competency and who has the required scientific and pedagogical skills.

A person can be appointed as Associate Professor (Docent) who has not yet been appointed Docent or Professor in the subject, and is considered to be of value for research and education at the faculty. This mainly applies to individuals who are already connected to the faculty through a teaching position. An individual who applies for appointment as Docent without having any such direct connection should in the application provide evidence of research that has been carried out in co-operation with researchers at one of the faculty departments, and/or involvement as a teacher or supervisor at any of these departments. An individual can also be appointed as Docent if the applicant has successfully defended a doctoral thesis at one of the faculty departments, without being directly involved in research or teaching at this department at the point in time when the application is submitted, provided that the applicant is considered to be of value for the department. An individual whose main connection through employment is with another higher education institution (HEI) with the right of appointing people as Docent shall, however, primarily apply to be appointed to that title at that institution of higher education.

### **2. Application procedure**

The procedure for handling applications can be summarized as follows:

- a. The application is submitted by the applicant (see section 3).
- b. The Head of Department submits a letter of support along with suggestions for experts to review the application (see section 4).
- c. The Board of Docentship decides whether the application is complete, or if it needs to be supplemented. The Board's decision is communicated to the applicant and the Head of Department.
- d. If the Board, after the application has been supplemented in appropriate cases, considers the qualifications presented in the application to meet the requirements for docent application, experts are appointed. If not, the matter is tabled, and the Head of Department is asked to submit a more thorough assessment. Once such an assessment has been submitted, the Board decides whether to send the application to the experts or not.
- e. Once the Board has decided to send the application to the experts, they are informed of their task, and the applicant is asked to send the selected publications to the experts (see section 4 below). The Head of Department is also notified of the decision.
- f. The experts review the application (see section 5).
- g. The experts' assessments are considered by the Board (see section 6). The Board decides whether the applicant shall be exempt from a teaching test. If not, a teaching

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\* In the event of a discrepancy between the Swedish guidelines and the English translation, the Swedish version takes precedence.

test is arranged, after which the Board decides whether the applicant is to be appointed as Docent.

### 3. Application

An individual who wishes to be appointed as Docent shall initially contact the professor at the department who is most closely concerned in order to get a preliminary evaluation of whether an application is justified. The professor who is most closely concerned shall already at this stage consult with colleagues within the subject, as well as with the Head of Department. Then, the following material shall be submitted to the Faculty Board:

a) **The application must indicate in what subject an appointment as Docent is applied for.** Appointments as Docent are normally granted in those subjects that have a graduate programme within the faculty. In certain cases, appointments as Docent can also be granted in a subject that does not fulfil this requirement, but that is still, entirely or partly, within the area of the social sciences. Such cases can occur when the subject is part of the graduate programme at another Swedish HEI, when the faculty has a long-term intention to build up a competence within the area in order to establish it as a subject with a graduate programme, or if the subject is of an interdisciplinary nature. The subject must however cover a broad area, and not only be a specialisation within an existing subject (for example the names of certain professorial chairs such as work psychology or statistics with a specialisation in the general production of statistics). In cases where the subject is not a subject within the graduate programme, the application must include a special motivation for why it is valuable for the faculty to grant an appointment as Docent.

b) **a CV** with a copy of the certificate of the doctoral degree or the equivalent.

c) **a list of selected publications**, separately listed and numbered. The applicant may select a maximum of ten scientific publications that are to be presented as support for the application, including the doctoral thesis, which must always be selected. Only published or accepted manuscripts may be selected. Editorship alone (where no authorship is involved) may not be selected.

The role of the applicant is to be specified in publications that have more than one author. If possible, the specification of roles shall be certified by supervisors (early works, preceding and including the doctoral thesis) and/or co-authors (later works). In special cases, where these options are not available, the applicant may state the division of labour. The applicant's contribution shall clearly appear.

The list shall also state whether, and to what extent, there is an overlap between the selected publications (including the doctoral thesis). If there is a considerable overlap between the publications, only the most representative (best, most developed) publication shall be selected.

In the summary of the applicant's publications, these shall be presented as a separate, numbered list.

d) **a complete list of publications**, followed by a brief presentation of the applicant's research. The publications must be listed according to an established system of citation, e.g., the Harvard system.

e) a description of **teaching activities** (primarily at a HEI), preferably a signed statement that gives a comprehensive picture of the extent, quality and level of the teaching, or possibly an excerpt from an official register. If the excerpt is difficult to interpret, it should be supplemented with comments that clarify the actual work carried out, and a list of teaching activities where the individual has been employed on an hourly basis. The statement of the quality of the teaching can, for example, contain information about originality and variations in forms of teaching and should, if possible, illustrate the applicant's ability to convey knowledge, structure presentations and convey an interest in his/her subject

**The application shall be sent to:**

[registrator@su.se](mailto:registrator@su.se)

#### **4. Initial procedure**

The professor who is most closely concerned shall confer with the other professors in the subject about suitable experts (normally one internal, at the department, and one external outside Stockholm University). After this consultation, the Head of Department submits the proposal to the Board of Docentship. At the same time, the Head of Department makes a statement concerning the application and the proposal for experts. The internal expert can be the professor most closely concerned who, in turn, might have been the supervisor. The external expert must normally hold a Swedish professorial chair in the subject in question. A foreign expert (in particular a professor from any of the other Nordic countries) with a good knowledge of the requirements for docentship in Sweden can also be appointed. Experts from non-Nordic countries often lack such factual knowledge, however, and shall thus only be appointed in very exceptional cases. Neither an internal nor an external expert is allowed to have any joint publication that is included in the application for docentship. In those cases where there is no internal expert for whom this requirement is fulfilled, two external experts can instead be appointed.

The statement submitted by the Head of Department shall certify that the question of a potential conflict of interest has been duly considered in the selection of experts; that no conflict of interest exists; that the matter has been prepared correctly; and that the professors' collegium/equivalent supports the application. If the applicant is not employed at the department, it shall also be stated in what way the applicant can benefit its activities.

In certain cases, two external experts shall be appointed in addition to the internal expert: if the subject is not represented at the faculty, or if the applicant has earned a doctoral degree in another subject than the one that the application concerns.

When the subject for the docentship is not a subject within the University's graduate programme, the matter must first be prepared by the professors at the institution in question. The Head of Department must in its statement motivate why it should be possible to grant a docentship in this subject, and also state whether this is appropriate.

The first time an appointment as Docent is applied for in a subject, the Board of Docentship must ask for approval from the Faculty Board of the Social Sciences. If additional people apply for appointment as Docent in a (new) subject where an appointment as Docent has already been granted, the Board decides on the matter itself, based on what emerged in the earlier approval by the Faculty Board.

The experts are appointed by the Board of Docentship.

The decision is sent to the experts together with the application and these guidelines. The experts are also provided with information about the remuneration.

The applicant sends the selected publications directly to the experts. The works are to be numbered in accordance with the list of selected publications (see 3c above) and sorted in numerical order.

## **5. Guidelines for experts**

The experts' assessments shall include a relatively extensive report on and a critical scrutiny of the main features of the applicant's scientific work with clear references to the submitted publications. The experts' assessments shall also contain an evaluation of the applicant's pedagogical skills. A clear statement shall be made about whether the applicant shall be appointed as Docent or not, and whether the applicant shall be exempt from a teaching test or not. Each expert opinion shall be about 4 pages (1600 words) long.

The experts may contact each other but must submit individual expert opinions. The expert opinions should be submitted to the board within three months after the appointment of the experts.

### **a) Pedagogical skills**

Research qualifications carry the largest weight for being appointed as Docent. However, the applicant must also have shown such pedagogical skills as can be required by a teacher at the university. The internal expert, who has often been in direct contact with the applicant for a longer period of time and is expected to be informed about the teaching at the department, carries the largest responsibility for assessing the teaching quality. Both supervision and other kinds of teaching should be considered. Course evaluations might be a useful instrument for assessing pedagogical skills.

However, the external expert is also required to try to evaluate the pedagogical skills, in particular on basis of information about textbooks written by the applicant, but also on basis of popular scientific works and pedagogical-administrative contributions. Both the internal and the external expert shall clearly state whether the extent and quality of the teaching are sufficient to exempt the applicant from a teaching test.

An applicant who already before submitting the application has carried out considerable teaching activities at an institution of higher education without any considerable complaints being made against this person should have fulfilled the reasonable pedagogical qualification requirements in this context. An applicant who has completed at least 100 lecture hours can be exempt from the teaching test. In this case, the experts shall consider these teaching qualifications to be relevant for the subject area of the docentship applied for.

### **b) Research skills**

The experts shall, in particular, consider the degree to which the applicant is independent and knowledgeable, having a sound judgement of methodological and theoretical questions, and a good writing ability. Among the works of an applicant, purely scientific works will carry most weight. Advanced reports of investigations, research information and reliable popular scientific work are, however, also of value for the qualifications. Path-breaking textbooks might also be of independent scientific value, besides their pedagogical value.

Scientific skills are to be evaluated in an overall international perspective. This does not mean that writing in a foreign language has a value in itself, but that it proves the applicant to be widely read and independent in relation to the international research community. It is also important to be able to connect one's results to international research.

The fact that the works of an applicant have been accepted by well-known international journals with a peer-review procedure constitutes a particular qualification. In disciplines where such publications are common, the applicant shall, in the normal case, also have several accepted publications of this kind. In other disciplines, and in those cases where there are no such publications, the experts carry a particular responsibility for evaluating whether the products still are of the quality that is normally required in the international research community.

The Board also considers the international attention of the applicant's work. However, compilations from citation indexes should be interpreted with some care and with an awareness of the sources of error of such statistics. It should also be noted that in certain subjects, it might take a long time before a publication is frequently cited.

An approximate rule is that the requirements for docentship are the equivalent of two good quality doctoral theses. In the normal case, this thus means a Swedish doctoral thesis and an equivalent additional amount of scientific work. However, the Faculty Board wants to emphasize that when evaluating competency for docentship, more weight must be attributed to quality than quantity.

## **6. Final stage, including the issue of a possible teaching test**

Once the experts' assessments have been submitted, they are handled by the Board of Docentship. The Board thus decides whether the applicant shall be exempt from the teaching test.

If the Board of Docentship decides that the applicant shall not be exempt from the teaching test, such a test must be arranged by the department concerned. The teaching test is a lecture that is to be graded by the Board.

The lecture shall be an integrated part of the regular teaching or seminar activities of the department concerned.

The Board of Docentship shall be present at the lecture and grade it with Pass or Fail. The internal expert shall also be present at the lecture. The evaluation shall be based on the applicant's ability to convey knowledge, structure the presentation and convey an interest in the subject.

The Board of Docentship decides, in the relevant case after a Pass on the teaching test, whether the applicant is to be appointed as Docent.

The matter is reported at the next meeting of the Faculty Board.

When a decision has been made about appointing the applicant as Docent, the applicant receives a Docent certificate.