

## **INSTRUCTIONS ON APPLYING FOR THE TITLE OF DOCENT AT THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

5 November 2024

### **Awarding the Title of Docent**

According to Section 89 of the Universities Act (558/2009), upon application a university may award the title of docent to a person who has comprehensive knowledge of his or her field, a capacity for independent research or artistic work demonstrated through publications or some other manner, and good teaching skills. According to Section 9 of the University of Lapland's Rules of Procedure, the rector decides on awarding the title of docent based on a proposal put forward by a faculty or an independent institute of the university.

### **Scientific Competence of an Applicant for the Title of Docent**

An applicant for the title of docent at the University of Lapland is expected to demonstrably have conducted research or artistic activities in a field related to the profile or focus areas of the university, a faculty, or an independent institute of the university. The expertise of the docent may be utilized in research projects, research groups, and degree and postgraduate education as agreed separately. Particular attention must be paid to ensure that the applicant's research or artistic output (scientific/artistic publications and activities) is adequate before applying for the title of docent.

Particular attention is paid to the following aspects of the merit of the applicant for the title of docent:

- A general requirement for the title of docent at the University of Lapland is that the applicant has completed a doctoral degree and produced other scientific publications which, in terms of scope, are equivalent to, at least a doctoral dissertation demonstrating a good level of knowledge, and, for the title of docent in the field of art, the applicant has conducted high-level artistic activities equivalent to the artistic output required for a doctoral dissertation demonstrating a good level of knowledge.
- the applicant's demonstrable, independent scientific activities, for example activities performed within research networks, documented activities as a reviewer of research and in recruitment roles, and success in obtaining research funding
- demonstrable activities within research communities, and reporting research results also in co-authored publications
- the applicant's merit in supervising theses and postgraduate studies and in teaching where applicable
- positions of responsibility within the applicant's field of science and/or art, such as roles in organizations and networks of the field of science or art, editorial roles in scientific journals and publication series, roles in collecting and maintaining significant research data sets, and roles in organizing conferences.

As a rule, the title of docent is not awarded to the personnel of the University of Lapland. However, the title of docent may be awarded to a member of the University of Lapland's personnel, a holder of a doctoral degree, on special grounds if the field is not represented at any other university in Finland. The assessment of whether there are special grounds is conducted by the rector or a management representative appointed by the rector, and at the faculties by the dean, and at the Arctic Centre by the director of the Arctic Centre, prior to the faculty's or board's consideration of the application.

### **Applying for the Title of Docent**

To initiate the application process, the applicant contacts the dean or administrative manager of the faculty. In the faculty's professor meeting, it will be determined whether there are sufficient grounds for awarding the title of docent in the field that the application concerns. A positive decision means that the applicant may proceed with the submission of an application for the title of docent. The written application is addressed to the rector of the University of Lapland. The application is submitted electronically to the Records Office of the University of Lapland at [kirjaamo@ulapland.fi](mailto:kirjaamo@ulapland.fi).

The signed application must indicate the applicant's contact information, the field of the title of docent that the application concerns, and the applicant's merit to be considered for the title of docent. The application must include the applicant's Researcher's Curriculum Vitae prepared according to the recommendations of the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity (TENK), a teaching portfolio (see separate instructions) and, for assessment of the scientific competence of the applicant, up to 10 publications. In case of co-authored publications, the applicant must include an authorship contribution statement clarifying their role in producing the publication, except where the applicant's authorial role is clear from the publication itself. The publications are to be numbered in accordance with the list of publications.

The application should be written in English if the experts to assess the application are expected to be non-Finnish speaking.

The Faculty Council will determine whether there are sufficient grounds for the title of docent and decides on requesting expert statements regarding the title of docent and inviting the applicant to give a teaching demonstration.

### **Assessment of the applicant's scientific competence**

The Faculty will obtain a statement concerning the applicant's scientific competence from at least two experts external to the University. At least one of the experts must be a professor.

In their statement, the expert is expected to concentrate on the up to ten publications selected for assessment by the applicant, and briefly assess the rest of the applicant's scientific output. The expert is requested to submit the statement within two months of receiving the request, and the recommended length of the statement is 3 to 5 pages.

Once both expert statements have been received by the Faculty, the statements become public. After having received the expert statements, the Faculty Council will decide on inviting the applicant to give a teaching demonstration, or where one or both statements do not consider the applicant's scientific competence adequate for the title of docent, the

Faculty Council will decide on terminating the application process for awarding the title of docent.

### **Assessing the Applicant's Teaching Skills**

When assessing the applicant's teaching skills as a whole, the factors taken into consideration are teaching experience, demonstrable record of development of teaching, pedagogical training and thinking, experience of supervising theses, ability to produce learning materials, other teaching merit, and the teaching demonstration given for the title of docent.

An applicant may be exempted from giving a teaching demonstration if the applicant has given a teaching demonstration for a teaching position at a university in a field related to the title of docent applied for, and the teaching demonstration has been graded 'good' or higher. Exemption may also be granted if, based on reports presented, the applicant can be indisputably demonstrated to have the good teaching skills required for the title of docent.

The teaching demonstration is a public event organized in connection with the meeting of the Faculty Council in the university premises. Teaching demonstrations are typically given in the form of a lecture. The topic of the teaching demonstration must be related to the field of the title of docent applied for, and the topic is communicated to the administrative secretary of the Faculty prior to the teaching demonstration. At the beginning of the teaching demonstration, it must be stated for which stage of studies the teaching demonstration is intended. The duration of the teaching demonstration is 20 minutes, after which the participants have the opportunity to ask questions (10 minutes).

The Faculty Council will assess the teaching demonstration. The assessment is carried out with attention to factors such as structuring the teaching situation, defining the learning outcomes, taking the perspective of the target audience into consideration, content covered, teaching methods and tools, interaction with the audience, and time management.

A teaching demonstration can be either approved or rejected. A teaching demonstration is graded 'excellent', 'good' or 'satisfactory'. A rejected teaching demonstration cannot be compensated for by other teaching merit. If an applicant's teaching demonstration is graded 'satisfactory', the applicant may be considered as having the good teaching skills required for the title of docent, provided that the other merit documented in the applicant's teaching portfolio compensates for the shortcomings of the teaching demonstration. At the discretion of the Faculty, a teaching demonstration that has been rejected or graded 'satisfactory' can also be retaken.

### **Putting forward a Proposal for the Title of Docent**

After the applicant's scientific competence, teaching demonstration and teaching skills as a whole have been assessed, the Faculty Council will make a proposal to the rector on awarding the title of docent.

Once the title of docent has been awarded to an applicant by the rector, the holder of the title of docent is entitled to continue to use the title also after retirement.

For the holder of the title of docent, compensation for teaching, supervision and assessment of theses is determined according to the university's general remuneration policies and instructions.