

Rules for the Appointment of Docents at Dalarna University

The University Education and Research Board (UFN) at Dalarna University may appoint teachers with doctoral degrees as unpaid docents if it is felt at the staffing committee meeting that this will benefit research and education at the University. UFN must delegate the preparation of matters related to docentships to the Committee for Academic Appointments (AFU). A docent is appointed to a specific subject.

1 § Eligibility

To be eligible for appointment as a docent, the applicant must hold a doctoral degree or have equivalent competence and must have the requisite documented academic/research and pedagogical expertise in accordance with the criteria in § 4 and 5 of this document.

2 § Benefits to research and education at Dalarna University – reason for appointment

The University reviews docent applications only when it is deemed that a docentship will benefit the University's research and education. This also applies to applications from applicants who are not employed at Dalarna University. Anybody who wants to be appointed as a docent must first consult with the relevant Deputy Head of School, or equivalent, as well as the Head of Subject. The Deputy Head of School appoints a senior researcher (preferably a professor) from the School who has sound subject knowledge. The senior researcher will conduct a general collegial review as part of an initial assessment of whether the applicant has the requisite documented academic/research and pedagogical expertise in accordance with the criteria in § 4 and 5 that allows the application to proceed. The Deputy Head of School and the senior researcher submit a concise joint statement of opinion to the staffing committee as to whether the docentship will benefit the University's research and education, and whether the applicant's academic/research competence and pedagogical expertise are sufficient for the matter to proceed to AFU. At the staffing committee meeting, the Head of School decides whether the appointment of the applicant as docent will benefit the subject and the University as a whole. An applicant does not have an unconditional right to be appointed as a docent even if they have the requisite qualifications. After the Head of School has approved the application in terms of the benefits it will afford the University, the application is submitted to the University in accordance with § 6, and the matter is handed over to AFU for further preparation.

3 § Experts and co-opted special members

The Committee for Academic Appointments (AFU) appoints, for each case, at least two external experts whose names are put forward by the Head of School. The experts must be docents and at least one must be a professor and be well acquainted with the subject. As far as possible, gender diversity should be considered with the appointment of experts.

When assessing the applicants, both their academic/research and pedagogical credentials are to be assessed in accordance with the criteria in § 4 and 5. The expert is paid a fee to submit their independent written statement to the AFU. The expert must carefully consider whether the applicant meets the requirements for academic/research and pedagogical expertise as outlined in § 4 and 5. They must give clear reasons for their opinion.

Two members are co-opted from the School concerned. The co-opted members are the Head of School or Deputy Head of School, and a collegial member of the Advisory Council to the School (*IL – institutionsledningsråd*) who is at least a docent, preferably a professor. Where possible, gender diversity should be considered with the appointment of special members.

The job of the special members is to assess the credentials of the applicants using the assessment criteria in § 4 and 5. The special members are expected to contextualise these credentials in terms of the applicants' research background.

4 § Guidelines for the assessment of academic/research expertise

A doctoral thesis is usually a report on a study of a defined subject. In many cases, the doctoral student will have received extensive supervision during their studies from one or several teachers, which is why the thesis does not always demonstrate the independence required for appointment as docent. In addition to the doctoral thesis, the applicant for an unpaid docentship should have broadened their academic/research experience through the production of several independent works that demonstrate their academic/research competence. In general, the scope of the additional work should be at least equivalent to an additional doctoral thesis.

The content of their additional work should differ from the thesis although it may constitute a development of the thesis, regardless of whether the results of the thesis are presented in the form of separate articles or a monograph. Qualitatively, a docent's production should be significantly above the minimum requirements of a doctoral thesis.

When the additional work is being assessed, primary consideration is given to the writer's maturity as a scholar, for example, their theoretical and methodological awareness; their ability to be original and independent; their analytical acuity; and their ability to work across disciplines/their multidisciplinary. For an assessment of the applicant's originality and independence to be possible, the applicant should demonstrate their independence by describing and demonstrating their individual contributions in those cases where publications are co-authored. The works that constitute the basis for the expert review should have already either been published or been accepted for publication. The applicant must demonstrate documented research work over the last two years. International publication and/or publication in peer-reviewed publications should be given consideration in the subject areas where such publication is possible and where it is in keeping with scholarly tradition. The ability to obtain research funding from external research funders is viewed positively.

5 § Guidelines for the assessment of pedagogical expertise

With regard to pedagogical credentials, the applicant should – in order to be appointed docent – have documented experience of planning teaching, of evaluating teaching, and of actual teaching, and also of assessment of students at the first-cycle, second-cycle, and/or third-cycle. The applicant should have experience of supervision at the doctoral level. However, if

such experience is lacking, extensive experience of supervision at the first-cycle and second-cycle can be considered to compensate for this. Completion of supervisor education is a requirement, and education in teaching and learning in higher education is an asset as is the authorship of textbooks and research information. The applicant should have developed a reflective approach to their role as teacher and to the core values associated with higher education.

AFU reserves the right to invite the applicant to complete a pedagogical test as this will assist in the decision-making process. In these cases, AFU is responsible for the design of the pedagogical test and for communicating information about it to the applicant.

6 § Applications

Applications to be “appointed as an unpaid docent in ... /subject/” at Dalarna University should be addressed to the Vice-Chancellor and sent to Registrar, Dalarna University, 791 88 Falun, Sweden or, if digital, to registrator@du.se.

The application must include (see also the corresponding points in “ReachMee”):

- CV.
- Information about doctoral supervisor education.
- Complete list of publications (the works that the applicant wishes to refer to must be marked in the list of publications and attached to the application, see below).
- A written summary of academic/research and artistic work/activities: The presentation of the academic/research or artistic work/activities should both report the credentials achieved and also consider future work/activities: i.e., it must include a reflection on planned future academic/research or artistic work/activities.
- Works cited. The most relevant works (maximum eight) in relation to the subject area in question. These works must be highlighted in the list of publications. Their doctoral thesis must be included.
- Teaching portfolio: Pedagogical credentials must be presented using the template on the Dalarna University website, www.du.se/pedagogiskameriter. As with the presentation of academic/research or artistic qualifications above, the pedagogical reflection should also give thought to future work.
- Where applicable, a certificate showing completion of education in teaching and learning in higher education, or, alternatively, validation of pedagogical education. Other documents, such as grades and certificates (here the applicant should attach statements of opinion from the Deputy Head of School and the senior researcher on the applicant’s academic/research and teaching expertise and on the benefits of the docentship for the University, according to § 2 above).

In addition to the guidelines above, there may be other instructions depending on the subject.

7 § Processing

After the experts have been appointed, AFU sends them both the application and the cited works. The experts each provide an independent written statement of opinion. After their statements have been received, AFU, which receives all the documents, pursues the matter and submits proposals for a decision, with a view to the experts’ position and assessment of the pedagogical test (if there was one). Equal attention should be paid to the assessment both

of pedagogical expertise and of academic/research expertise, even if the academic/research merits carry the most weight when it comes to applications for a docentship.

After considering the experts' statements of opinion, AFU can propose that the applicant be appointed docent. The proposal is submitted to UFN, which decides whether to appoint the applicant to the position of unpaid docent at Dalarna University. UFN then issues a certificate of docentship, and this is sent to the applicant.

8 § Irregularities in Applications

If irregularities (for example, plagiarism, deliberate or negligent errors in the application that give a misleading picture of the applicant's qualifications) are suspected in the preparation of the application, the application will be rejected or the matter will be postponed pending further investigation. Irregularities in the application can also result in the University taking steps in line with labour law; in the opening of a case by the Staff Disciplinary Board; or, where there is suspicion of research misconduct, in an investigation by the Swedish National Board for Assessment of Research Misconduct.

If an application for appointment as an unpaid docent is rejected due to irregularities being found (by a body other than UFN – for example, the Staff Disciplinary Board), a new application may not be made until 36 months have elapsed since the submission of the application that was rejected. A new application must be initiated in the staffing committee meeting, where an assessment is made as to the benefits for research and education at the University. If a new application is submitted in accordance with the above, this must be a new complete application. The earlier application will not be evaluated.