

Guidelines for awarding the title of docent

These guidelines are a translation of “Riktlinjer för antagning av docent” decided on 10 December 2015, dnr LiU-2015-00520, FSF 15-8.8.

In the event of a discrepancy between the English translation of the guidelines and the Swedish original, the Swedish version shall take precedent.

General considerations

The title of docent is important to both the individual who receives it and the higher educational institution that awards it. Being awarded the title of docent is an important step in an academic career that needs to be taken before the individual can assume the role of main supervisor for doctoral students or be considered for promotion to the position of associate professor. Only docents can be considered as faculty opponents, members of PhD examination committees or certain other types of review commission.

Generally, appointees should hold an academic position at Linköping University (LiU). However, under special circumstances, the faculty may consider applications from individuals who do not hold a teaching position at LiU. In the first instance, docents should be appointed within a subject of doctoral education established by the Faculty Board. In exceptional circumstances, the faculty may appoint docents in another subject. In such cases, the Faculty Board shall decide whether the applicant is eligible to be considered for the title of docent at the faculty. The authority to award the title of docent is delegated by the board of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences to the faculty's Appointments Board.

Requirements for awarding the title of docent

General criteria

Each award of the title of docent shall clearly be of benefit to the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. The university department of the individual in question shall back the application before it is submitted.

Scientific skills

Docents are expected to lead, conduct and disseminate successful research. Scientific skills are therefore of great importance in the assessment of an application for the title of docent. The criteria for scientific skills are:

- Publications of a high quality according to the publication standards of the subject field. The scope of the total scientific production should be

equivalent to at least one additional doctoral thesis of a high scientific quality within the subject field.

- Progression in terms of depth and breadth compared to the doctoral thesis, and development towards greater definition as an independent researcher.
- Obtaining external research funding as a main applicant or a co-applicant.

Teaching skills

The applicant shall provide documentation of quantity and quality of teaching skills, at undergraduate, graduate and doctoral levels. The documented amount of teaching shall exceed three months of full-time work.

Supervision of students, including doctoral students, is closely associated with the title of docent. Being awarded the title of docent is therefore contingent on:

- Having completed a course in research supervision at LiU (or equivalent), including the faculty's part of the course.
- Documented expertise in supervising doctoral students or bachelor and master students.

Applicants who have not completed university teaching education in research supervision at the time of application must be enrolled on such a course. Applicants who have completed a course in research supervision at another university at the time of application must complete the faculty-specific part of LiU's research supervision course as soon as possible after they have received the title of docent.

The application and its format

The application should consist of:

Background

- A specification of the subject to which the application relates, and the department hosting the docent.
- A personal statement of reasons for applying

Scientific skills

- A description of research activities and the applicant's own scientific production
- A full list of publications sorted according to publications before and after doctoral degree, printed and peer-reviewed books/articles/reports, materials in manuscript format, popular science publications
- A list of publications (a maximum of 10) selected for the application, stating which of these publications the applicant considers to be the most important contributions; for co-authored publications, the applicant's contribution must be made clear

- A description of involvement in national and international networks, or in other relevant research collaboration
- A list of qualifications from internal, national and international assignments as a co-supervisor, a research leader, a project manager, a conference organiser and a reviewer of manuscripts and applications, together with commissions within research councils as well as at faculty and departmental level.

Teaching skills

- A description and documentation of teaching performed at undergraduate, graduate and doctoral levels, detailing the scope, course level and higher education institution. (The equivalent of three months of full-time teaching is the minimum in order to receive the title of docent at the faculty.)
- A description of supervision at undergraduate, graduate and doctoral levels
- Course development and course management
- Planning and chairing of seminars
- Popular science activities
- Authorship of text books and/or other educational materials
- Teaching courses
- Higher education teaching courses
- Doctoral supervision course

Teaching skills must be supported by certified copies of certificates.

Letter from the department

The application should include a letter confirming the value and usefulness for the department of awarding the title of docent. This letter must include an assessment that the applicant is qualified to be considered for external expert review. Proposals for expert(s) and confirmation that there is no conflict of interest shall also be submitted. The certificate should be signed by a professor representing the division in question.

In those cases where there is no professor in the subject to which the application relates at the division in question, the certificate should be signed by the head of department. If there is no professor in the subject to which the application relates at the division in question but there is such a professor at the faculty, this professor shall submit an assessment of whether the applicant is well enough qualified to be considered for external expert review.

The application: format and process

Linköping University's CV template must be used.

The application, together with selected publications (a maximum of 10) and the letter from the department as well as proposals for expert(s) must be sent to the secretary of the Appointments Board. The application should be submitted electronically in Word or PDF format, except for the submission of monographs (one copy).

External experts

The department in question is responsible for ensuring that proposals for external expert(s) are appended to the application. One external expert will normally be appointed for the assignment.

The proposed external expert should not be employed at Linköping University. In those cases where there is not a professor in the subject at the division in question or at the faculty, two external experts will be appointed.

The proposed expert must be a professor within a relevant subject field. The reason for the proposal must be explained. The proposed expert must have been approached by the department concerning his or her willingness to accept the assignment. The letter from the department should confirm that there is no conflict of interest. The letter should include information on the proposed expert's full title, address, personal details, and current employment. The department shall investigate when the expert will be able to complete the assignment.

The expert's assignment consists of assessing the applicant's scientific and teaching skills and submitting a written statement based on the faculty's criteria for awarding the title of docent. The expert is not present when the Appointments Board makes its decision, but may in special circumstances be invited to take part in the board meeting prior to the final decision. The expert fee is based on the remuneration level established for the assignment.

Faculty Board Procedure

The procedure of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences for applications for the title of docent should normally not exceed five months from receipt of the application to announcement of the decision. Throughout the procedure, the secretary of the Appointments Board keeps in regular contact with the expert by email or telephone.

If the Appointments Board finds that the applicant has demonstrated sufficient qualifications to be considered for the title of docent at the faculty, the board will decide that the application should be sent for expert review. If the expert assessment indicates that the application should be rejected, the applicant will be informed and given the opportunity to withdraw the application.

The decision of the Appointments Board is notified ten working days after the decision is made. This notification must include the date when a docent certificate

will be issued to the applicant. Newly appointed docents at the faculty must give an inauguration lecture, arranged by the department or in association with a series of lectures at the faculty.

Docents are registered in a list of docents at the faculty, and the title is held for life. However, if cooperation and contact between the faculty and the docent has ceased, or if a docent has acted in a manner that seriously harms the faculty, the Faculty Board may decide that the docent should be struck from the list.