

# Guidelines for the admission of docents at the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences

## **1 Background**

The word docent is derived from the Latin word docere, which means to teach or to educate. A docent must have acquired a sufficient level of documented scientific expertise and knowledge to be independent in their subject area. A docent is appointed if this is beneficial for research and education at the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Linköping University (LiU). There is no salary attached to the position.

A docent must be able to independently acquire scientifically based knowledge and convey it to others. Therefore, high demands are placed on both scientific and pedagogical competence.

## **2 Duties of a docent**

A docent shall

1. conduct active research,
2. undertake teaching assignments at different levels of education at the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences,
3. upon request be a member of the examining committee at thesis defences or licentiate seminars at the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences,
4. be prepared to accept other assignments for the university or faculty, e.g. assignments as an internal expert, and
5. be prepared to take on assignments as a faculty examiner or member of an examining committee at another university.

Assignments in teaching (point 2) include, in addition to the conducting of various teaching elements, also, for example, planning and evaluation, participation in pedagogical development work or work with syllabuses, as well as general and individual study plans. Teaching is to be based on science and proven experience, both in terms of subject and pedagogy.

### **3 Qualification**

The applicant appointed shall conduct active independent research closely connected to the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences at LiU. In order to be appointed as a docent, the applicant must have a doctoral degree or have equivalent competence. The applicant must meet the requirements for subject competence, both concerning scientific expertise and independence in the subject matter of the docent appointment, as well as pedagogical competence.

An application for a docent appointment can normally be approved no earlier than two years after the completion of a doctoral degree. The purpose of this time is to enable the candidate to develop and document their independence as a researcher and to establish their own research projects.

For a docent appointment in a non-clinical subject, a minimum of four years of full-time service is normally required, of which at least two years must be after the thesis defence, including both research and teaching in the subject to which the application relates. In addition to the above mentioned requirements, for a docent appointment in a clinical field (medical speciality), the applicant must, unless there are special reasons, be a specialist in the corresponding subject. In a clinical field with no formal specialist competence, the applicant must have completed the corresponding clinical service. However, a non-clinically active physician or non-physician may be appointed as a docent in a clinical field, if this is indicated by prefix added to the name of the field (e.g. “theoretical”, “experimental”, “nursing” or “rehabilitation”).

### **4 Scientific expertise and independence**

Scientific merits are primarily assessed by the external expert(s). In addition to fulfilling the requirements for a doctoral degree, the applicant must demonstrate further scientific expertise and the ability to conduct independent research.

A significant part of the scientific contribution must have been published after the thesis work; it must be coherent, not fragmented across too many fields, and must show sufficient scientific depth and breadth.

The benchmark is at least 15 original works (including the works included in the thesis); however, the number may be modified upwards or downwards depending on the scope, scientific quality, choice of journal and degree of demonstrated scientific independence. At least two original works with the applicant as principal investigator (first or last author), and without a previous principal or assistant supervisor as co-author, must have been published after the thesis defence. In cases where shared authorship in a “leading” position occurs, the principal investigator contribution may be downgraded. A brief description of the applicant’s role and independent contribution in the cited independent works must be included in the publication list.

An original work must be based on the authors’ new and own research results, contain information about the methods and be published or accepted in a serious international scientific journal that uses a peer review system. In some cases, individual original works can be replaced by meta-analyses or systematic reviews, but they can only in exceptional cases be invoked as independent works. Traditional overview articles and case reports cannot replace original work. The list of publications is to be drawn up according to specific instructions, see 9 Contents of the application for a docent appointment, point 6.

Independence is also documented through own research grants and review assignments for serious international journals and post-doc residency in another research environment. A report on the scientific independence of the research conducted after the thesis defence must be attached (independence biography), a maximum of two A4 pages.

In the letter of intent, a maximum of two A4 pages, the applicant must describe future projects and research activities related to the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences at LiU. It is of particular importance to describe projects for which the applicant leads and has (or is seeking) funding. It must be clearly stated how ongoing and planned activities are related to the overall research questions addressed by the projects.

## **5 Pedagogical competence**

Pedagogical merits are primarily assessed by the two internal experts. When assessing pedagogical competence, the applicant’s subject competence, knowledge and insights on learning and teaching methods, as well as practical experience of teaching are to be taken into account.

The applicant must have met the following pedagogical criteria in order to obtain a docentship:

- Actively participated in teaching of university courses at different levels (undergraduate, graduate or doctoral level). Normally, a minimum of 120 hours of mixed teaching is required: the majority within the last six years. A maximum of 60 hours of these may be research or thesis supervision and a maximum of 40 hours may be clinical supervision of students.
- Completed the course “Research Supervision” – graduate course in higher education pedagogy, 4 credits or equivalent.
- Completed the course “Introduction to PBL and tutorial group supervision – basic education for supervisors in problem-based learning” or equivalent.
- Conducted a written pedagogical reflection/analysis of significance for the development of teaching forms/elements within the subject area or with other focus relevant to the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences.

Documentation of teaching experience may include lectures and supervision in various forms such as tutorial groups, laboratory exercises, clinical practice, degree projects, participation in examination and evaluation work, pedagogical development and educational/syllabus work. Educational administration is also taken into consideration. The documentation should also include the results of teaching evaluations.

The pedagogical reflection/analysis aims to develop teaching within the subject (or related) area of docentship at any of the faculty’s educational levels (undergraduate, graduate or doctoral) or specialist level of education (e.g. SK courses). It can, for example, detail the development of student-active forms of teaching, traditional teaching elements, clinical practice/supervision, laboratory exercises, or the development of examination forms or evaluations (see examples on the website).

The following are appointed as resource persons for the prospective docent's pedagogical reflection/analysis

1. a teacher knowledgeable in the subject (docent at the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences) upon suggestion by the applicant, and
2. a pedagogically competent person with whom it is incumbent on the applicant to establish contact (resource persons appointed by the faculty are listed on the Appointments Board's website).

A preliminary title and a very brief description of the planned reflection/analysis and the names of the appointed resource persons must be attached to the application for docentship.

The reflection/analysis is submitted in writing (about 1000–1500 words) and must be grounded in current science. A more detailed instruction of how the report can be structured can be found on the Appointments Board's website.

The results of the reflection/analysis must also be presented orally in an appropriate forum at the faculty, e.g. as a new/developed scheduled element in the faculty's programmes, in the pedagogical courses given for teachers at the university, or as a seminar at the department to which the applicant belongs.

The completed report is submitted to the Appointments Board - Docentship and Promotions after it has been reviewed and approved by the pedagogical resource person.

Previous pedagogical work can be credited. This is decided by the Appointments Board in consultation with pedagogical resource persons.

In the letter of intent (see point 11 under 9. Contents of the application), it is important to describe your future and planned teaching activity and its development, which will benefit the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences.

The letter of intent and the pedagogical reflection/analysis are presented orally to the members of the Appointments Board (including the student representative) in connection with the finalisation of the application.

## **6 Assessment and admission**

After a quality check, the submitted application documents are taken up at a meeting with the Appointments Board - Docentship and Promotions for review and appointment of internal experts. If the Board chooses to proceed with the application, in consultation with the head of subject (subject representative or other professor in the subject), the Board appoints an external expert outside the faculty for the assessment of scientific expertise. The internal experts primarily assess pedagogical competence, and the pedagogically competent person assesses the pedagogical reflection/analysis.

## **7 Statement from an external expert**

An external expert's statement must include:

1. A brief description of the problem areas addressed by the applicant and an assessment of the scientific value of the applicant's contributions. It must be clearly stated whether the applicant has conducted focused research of sufficient depth in a subject area.

2. An assessment of the applicant's scientific expertise and independence, as expressed in the applicant's scientific production. It must also be stated to what extent it is possible to distinguish that the applicant has started to develop their own research profile.
3. A final assessment of whether the applicant's scientific production qualitatively and quantitatively qualifies the applicant for docentship according to the regulations of LiU and the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences.

The external expert is remunerated for their work and their statement must be received within two months.

## **8 Statement from two internal experts**

The two internal experts' statements must include:

1. An assessment of the applicant's scientific expertise and independence, or a statement expressing agreement with the external expert.
2. An assessment of the applicant's pedagogical competence.
3. A summary assessment of the applicant's qualifications for admission as docent.

## **9 Contents of the application for a docentship**

1. Population registration certificate.
2. Certified list of qualifications and job titles relevant to the docentship.
3. Proof of doctoral degree. Minutes from the examining committee's assessment of the thesis defence (can be ordered from the LiU registrar). Name of the principal supervisor and all assistant supervisors if these are not stated in the minutes.
4. Certificate of certificate of specialist competence (when applying for a docentship in a clinical speciality).
5. List of publications (including accepted manuscripts) is written as follows:
  - a) sort into categories: original articles, case reports/series, overview articles, meta-analyses/syntheses, systematic reviews, protocols, editorials, correspondence, other articles are to be in numbered bulleted lists (starting with the number 1 for each category),
  - b) report in chronological order with the oldest publication first,
  - c) write all author names (and not "et al."),

- d) state, for each publication, the *impact factor* of the journal (year of publication), the quartile in the field and the number of citations for the publication (excluding self-citations)<sup>1</sup>,
  - e) clearly indicate which articles are included in the thesis, which articles are independent works without previous supervisors, and which, if any, articles are related to research outside the subject of the docentship (for articles that are accepted but not yet published, e-mail confirmation from the journal is to be included),
  - f) write the applicant's name in bold, and the main supervisor's name underlined,
  - g) clearly indicate where the applicant has shared authorship and
  - h) insert a short description of the applicant's contribution in the publications invoked as independent works
- 7. Report of scientific independence (maximum 2 pages) in research conducted after the thesis defence (see point 4).
  - 8. Certificates from completed pedagogical courses.
  - 9. Title of the pedagogical reflection/analysis and a brief description of the planned content and which resource persons have been contacted. In cases where the applicant wishes credit to be given to an already written work in academic teaching/subject didactics, this is attached to the application.
  - 10. Description of the applicant's pedagogical qualifications.
  - 11. Letter of intent (maximum 2 pages).
  - 12. Copies of the publications listed (point 6).

## 10 Transfer

Applicants who are already docent in another subject or at another institution of higher education and wish to have their docentship transferred must, in addition to the above-mentioned documents (except point 9 under 9. Contents of the application for a docentship) also attach a copy of the previous decision on docentship.

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<sup>1</sup> Journal Citation Reports,  
<https://login.e.bibl.liu.se/login?url=https://jcr.clarivate.com>

Applicants requesting a transfer of their docentship to another subject (this may, for example, apply to transfer from an experimental subject to a clinical speciality) must also demonstrate scientific competence and subject competence in the new subject.

In the case of transfers, the Appointments Board - Docentship and Promotions can decide on the matter without an external expert being consulted.

## **11 Entry into force**

These guidelines will enter into force on 1 January 2024.