



UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET

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Guidelines for Approval of Distinguished University Teachers

Faculty of Languages

Approved by delegation by the Faculty of Languages Faculty
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Introduction

The document *Teaching and Learning at Uppsala University* (UFV 2023/2188) emphasises that expertise in academic teaching and learning, commitment and teaching skills will have an explicit value as a career qualification for positions that include teaching and learning activities. The University has decided to establish a special career level, *distinguished university teacher*, for skilful educators. In the *Guidelines for Approval of Distinguished University Teachers* (UFV 2010/1842) adopted by the Vice-Chancellor, the term ‘distinguished university teacher’ is used for members of the teaching staff who have attained an advanced level of educational expertise. The guidelines specified below apply at the Faculty of Languages.

The designation ‘distinguished university teacher’ introduces an advanced level of educational expertise that differs significantly from the basic level in much the same way as qualification as docent differs from a doctoral degree. The requirements for attaining this advanced level are specified in established assessment criteria based on the definition of and criteria for teaching expertise laid down in the *Appointment Regulations for Uppsala University* (UFV 2019/1673). In addition to this, the Faculty of Languages has defined more precisely what is required to attain distinguished university teacher status in the faculty. The possibility of obtaining distinguished university teacher status derives from the need to create a possible career path for individuals who have distinguished themselves by their teaching achievements at our University, and by doing so have made a *substantial contribution* to high-quality education. Hence, to be granted distinguished university teacher status, it does not suffice for a person to have carried out their teaching duties well, and it is possible for a person to perform their teaching duties with a high degree of skill yet not live up to all the requirements and criteria for the title of distinguished university teacher. In sum, a person’s educational activities must meet high standards, as clarified in the following guidelines.

Processing and decision

Applications for distinguished university teacher status are to be submitted to the Faculty Board. In their application, applicants must provide evidence of their educational expertise in the form of a teaching and learning CV, a teaching portfolio and testimonials. At least one opportunity per year is offered to apply for assessment as a distinguished university teacher. The deadline for applications is normally 15 March. The Faculty of Languages Recruitment Committee decides whether to approve the application for further assessment following an initial examination of the matter. If the Recruitment Committee decides to reject the application, it must give reasons for this decision.

If the application is approved for further assessment, the Faculty Board appoints two experts in teaching and learning at the proposal of the department concerned. At least one of the experts must be employed at another higher education institution. The term ‘*expert in teaching and learning*’ refers not just to individuals with a degree in

education, but also to individuals who possess special didactic competence or who have distinguished themselves as good educators in one way or another (by receiving awards, gaining promotion, etc.). Both experts are to assess teaching expertise (not research expertise). At least one of the experts must be qualified in the field to which the applicant belongs. The experts must deliver assessments of the applicant's teaching expertise. Their statement must be based on the criteria listed below and conclude by taking a clear position.

The Faculty of Languages Board for Distinguished University Teacher Status processes the matter and delivers its opinion. The Faculty of Languages Board for Distinguished University Teacher Status is appointed by the Faculty Board at the beginning of each term of office. The group consists of the dean or deputy dean (chair), two representatives of the teaching staff, at least one of whom must be a distinguished university teacher, and one student representative. The assessment of merits shall include an interview. In normal cases, the assessment shall also be supplemented by a teaching test. The Board for Teacher Excellence shall issue an opinion, which shall include an assessment of the teaching test, if one has been conducted. The Faculty of Languages Faculty Board decides whether to confer distinguished university teacher status on an applicant, based on relevant documents in the case. The decision of the Faculty Board is not subject to appeal. In case of rejection, a new application may be made no sooner than one year after the decision.

Eligibility

The Vice-Chancellor's guidelines make it clear that only permanently employed teachers at Uppsala University (lecturers, senior lecturers/associate professors and professors) are eligible for distinguished university teacher status. In addition, applicants must be able to document that they have:

- completed at least 10 weeks of academic teacher training or the equivalent¹
- current and substantial experience of university level teaching
- documented experience of advanced educational leadership, development and/or follow-up roles, for example as a teacher with special educational responsibilities (e.g. teaching committee chair or subject coordinator) or programme coordinator
- documented continuous participation in continuing professional development for educators (teaching and learning courses, educational conferences and teaching and learning days).

¹ According to the Uppsala University Appointment Regulations, a prerequisite for considering that the applicant has teaching expertise is that the applicant has completed at least ten weeks of teacher training for higher education or the equivalent.

Application

Applications must include the following components. The documentation must clearly show how the applicant meets the criteria.

1. CV including:

- account of teaching and learning activities
- account of educational training
- account of educational leadership
- account of experience of teaching administration
- information about any teaching awards and honours
- information about any study resources produced
- complete list of publications (writings that relate to subject-based teaching and learning and subject didactics or that are to be regarded as study resources should be specially noted)
- other teaching and learning qualifications.

The CV should list all these aspects of the applicant's teaching and learning experience and qualifications. However, a presentation in the form of bullet points/similar is sufficient for this purpose. *More detailed comments and reasoning are to be given in the reflections required in the teaching portfolio (see point below).* What is required in the CV is therefore a documented overview of the applicant's teaching and learning activities.

2. **Teaching portfolio** comprising 12–15 pages (excluding appendices) including:

- Reflection on learning and teaching (*teaching and learning philosophy*), discussing past development and future educational visions.
- Descriptions with examples from your own educational practice in relation to your teaching and learning philosophy. The examples should include: course design, course development, experience of supervision, information and instructions for students, lectures and assessment modes and tasks. Choose the examples to reflect themes that are important in view of your own teaching and learning philosophy.
- Account of subject-didactic considerations displaying familiarity with current research on didactics and on teaching and learning in higher education.
- Account of the research basis of your own teaching.
- Account of educational collaboration.

3. **Testimonials** consisting of:

- Testimonial from director of studies describing the contents and scope of the applicant's teaching and general comments on students' opinions of the applicant if possible.
- Testimonial from head of department confirming that the applicant's department supports the application.

Assessment criteria

The assessment primarily focuses on educational quality. Importance is also attached to the scope of teaching over time, in terms of both breadth and depth. Furthermore, importance must be accorded to the ability to plan, initiate, lead and develop education and teaching, as well as the ability to base the teaching on research in the relevant field, subject didactics and general research on teaching and learning in higher education. Research in the relevant field refers here not just or primarily to the applicant's own research; instead, priority should be given to familiarity with the various parts of the field and research frontiers in the field. Educational expertise also includes the ability to interact on issues of teaching and learning in higher education with actors inside and outside the University. One overall criterion that applies throughout the assessment is that the focus must be on the students' learning.

The following assessment areas will be considered:

1. Teaching expertise
2. Advanced command of the subject area and scholarly approach
3. Educational development work and collaboration
4. Educational leadership.

Excellence must be shown in all areas.

Teaching expertise

Importance is attached to the following aspects when assessing teaching expertise:

- The applicant delivers inspiring and appreciated teaching of a high quality at different levels of the teaching system and across a broad field of knowledge.
- The applicant supports students in developing understanding, critical thinking and scholarly and professional skills and approaches.
- The applicant has a broad repertoire of student-activating teaching and assessment formats that are deployed in relevant ways.
- The applicant works with constructive alignment between outcomes, teaching and assessment, with the teaching being adapted to give the students involved the best possible chance to achieve the outcomes.
- The applicant pays attention to diversity perspectives and takes into consideration and makes the most of students' differences and diverse experiences.
- The applicant gives constructive feedback to develop students' competence and skills.
- The applicant continuously develops teaching and assessment and their own role as a teacher.

Advanced command of the subject area and scholarly approach

Importance is attached to the following aspects when assessing advanced command of the subject area and scholarly approach:

- The applicant stays up to date in the subject area by keeping abreast of the scholarly discussion in the field and relevant literature in subject didactics and teaching and learning.
- The applicant has extensive and in-depth knowledge of their subject area, as demonstrated, for example, by scholarly publications, production of study resources or reflections on the updating of course reading lists.
- The applicant reflects on the subject area, with its specific contents and knowledge requirements, and how this affects educational work and students' learning.

Educational development work and collaboration

Importance is attached to the following aspects when assessing educational development work:

- The applicant clarifies intended course learning outcomes and assessment criteria and explains the teaching and assessment formats in dialogue with students.
- The applicant pays attention to the prior understanding and expectations of different groups of students when planning the teaching.
- The applicant collaborates with others by exchanging experiences of subject area didactics, as documented by participation in courses, seminars, conferences and publications, for instance.
- The applicant uses course evaluations and reports to develop both their own teaching and courses and programmes.
- The applicant has actively participated in work on major changes in the programme.
- The applicant plays an active role in collegial discussions and teachers' committees.
- The applicant collaborates with actors outside the University to acquire knowledge that contributes to high-quality education that meets the needs of the wider community.
- The applicant develops and continuously revisits intended course and programme outcomes in relation to changes in society, the environment and professional life.

Educational leadership

Importance is attached to the following aspects when assessing educational leadership:

- The applicant successfully exercises educational leadership in roles such as course coordinator, programme coordinator or director of studies, and thereby influences courses and programmes beyond their own teaching.
- The applicant works actively on the development of new courses.

- The applicant develops education and contributes to colleagues' development as educators through educational leadership.
- The applicant is known for an ability to contribute to a creative work environment and to colleagues' development as educators.

Salary level

An employee granted distinguished university teacher status will receive a standardised increase in their monthly salary equivalent to the increase awarded to an employee acquiring docent status.