

UPPSALA UNIVERSITY  
Board of the Faculty of Law

DECISION  
17 October 2013 (revised on 11 June 2015)

## Guidelines for granting docent status

### 1. Purpose of appointing docents at the Faculty of Law

The purpose of granting the title or position of ‘docent’<sup>1</sup> at the Faculty of Law is to clearly recognise a person’s special academic expertise. Docent status may be conferred if it may be beneficial to the research and education. A docent is required to be active in education at postgraduate (research) level in various ways, such as providing proficient supervision and undertaking the role of ‘opponent’ in disputations (public defences of PhD theses). Obtaining docent status therefore presupposes academic qualifications over and above a doctoral degree.

Docent status may normally be conferred only in a subject in which education at postgraduate level is provided at the Faculty. A person who has gained docent status at another higher education institution may not be granted docent status in the same subject at the Faculty of Law in Uppsala.

### 2. Consultation

A person wishing to be granted docent status is recommended first to raise the matter informally with the Chair of the Research Committee. The Chair must then consult one or more subject representatives on the matter. Advice not to continue does not constitute any formal impediment to proceeding with the application.

### 3. Conferral requirements for applicants lacking positions at the Faculty of Law

If applicants have no permanent or time-limited appointment at the Faculty of Law, subject representatives must issue special statements of opinion regarding the manner in which the grant of docent status could benefit research and education at the Faculty. Benefit to research and education at the Faculty of Law may consist in the fact that the applicants, depending on their skills and availability, can be engaged as teachers and supervisors in education at research level (third cycle<sup>2</sup>), as members of the examining committee, as teachers in education at basic (undergraduate, Bachelor or first-cycle) level or advanced (Master or second-cycle) level, or in other central activities at the Faculty of Law.

### 4. Academic proficiency

The definition of the postgraduate education subject in which the applicant wishes to obtain

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<sup>1</sup> *Translator’s note.* At the Faculty of Law, ‘Docent’ is a title or non-salaried position granted to applicants with (a) proven ability to conduct high-quality, independent academic research over and beyond the basic requirements for a doctorate and (b) proven teaching skills. Docent status corresponds approximately to the following titles or positions in academic systems outside Sweden: a Reader in the UK, a *Privatdozent* in Germany and an Associate Professor in the US.

<sup>2</sup> *Translator’s note.* See <http://www.uu.se/en/students/degrees-and-careers/degrees/levels-and-degrees/>.

docent status governs the assessment of academic qualifications. The assessment of academic proficiency comprises, first, an evaluation of academic publications cited that are relevant to the research area and, second, an appraisal of the applicant's prospects of further academic activity in the subject specialisation concerned. With the limitations associated with the research education subject, breadth and depth alike have a bearing on assessment of the applicant's academic qualifications and proficiency. In the assessment, publications cited by the applicant must be assigned the due importance associated with their independent academic quality, regardless of the forms and forums in which they were published and their reach. The criteria for evaluating the applicant's academic proficiency are the familiarity with the subject that is demonstrated and the previous research, creativity and originality in the chosen research specialisation, along with the analytical depth and scale of academic production, taking into account the period in which the applicant has been working. In addition, the applicant's demonstrated ability to interact and constructively collaborate with other researchers is considered.

In the assessment of whether the applicant's academic proficiency is sufficient for conferral of docent status, the starting point is that this proficiency must *substantially exceed* the degree of skill that is necessary to obtain a doctorate.

A doctoral thesis of high quality that is supplemented by several high-quality articles written after the disputation confers docent status in academic terms. In the light of the quality of the PhD thesis, academic production on a considerably larger scale may be required for the period after the disputation. At least one of the academic publications written after the disputation should be in a language other than Swedish and preferably be published internationally.

Moreover, applicants must be able to show evidence of their academic proficiency being broadened by their further academic production after the doctoral thesis. Another qualification may be that applicants have been awarded multi-year external research grants in competition with other researchers.

In a weighted assessment of the applicant's academic qualifications and proficiency, further factors to which weight should be assigned include the following (listed in no particular order):

- publication after peer review
- presentation (international or national) of research results
- research collaboration (international or national)
- supervision of PhD students.

It is desirable for the expert's assessment to contain reflections on whether the applicant has achieved greater breadth and tackled new research questions after obtaining the doctorate.

## **5. Teaching proficiency**

Teaching of the subject concerned at basic, advanced or research level (first, second and third cycle respectively), comprising at least 100 teaching hours and declared by a director of studies (or equivalent) to be of good quality, can normally constitute a sufficient qualification. Also assessed as teaching qualifications are administrative inputs for planning and management of teaching, production of teaching materials, supervision, experience of

teaching law to practising lawyers and presentation of materials in popularised form. Teaching carried out within the framework of a doctoral studentship counts as a qualification for docent status.

## **6. Procedure**

Decisions in cases involving conferral of docent status are taken by the Board of the Faculty of Law.

An application for a docent appointment must be sent in triplicate to the Board of the Faculty of Law, Box 256, SE-751 05 Uppsala, Sweden.

The application must contain a list of qualifications, an academic CV including academic publications, and other documents intended to substantiate the applicant's academic proficiency.

The subject representatives must nominate two experts to judge the applicant's eligibility for docent status. The proposed experts should be professors at another faculty. Only if there are particular reasons why experts from the applicant's own faculty should be engaged may this be done. A 'particular reason' may be that the expertise required for assessing the case is lacking outside the faculty concerned.

When the application and the subject representative's nominations of experts and also, where required under section 3 above, the statement made by the subject representative has been received by the Board of the Faculty of Law, the Board appoints experts. These experts must then issue statements of opinion concerning the applicant's academic proficiency. It must be clear from these statements whether the appointment as docent is supported or not. The Recruitment Group must then submit a statement, containing a recommendation for a decision, to the Faculty Board.