



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

# **RULE – RECRUITMENT PROCESS WHEN APPOINTING TEACHERS**

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<sup>1</sup> This document has been translated from Swedish into English. If the English version differs from the original, the Swedish version takes precedence.



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### 1. Summary

Umeå University's appointments procedure for teachers (FS 1.1-57-18), regulates teaching categories, qualification requirements, assessment criteria for recruitments and promotions, and the external expert procedure. The rule for the recruitment process when appointing teachers defines the various parts of the process and defines relevant statutes and their application in the appointment of teaching staff.

### 2. Starting points for the recruitment process

Appointment of teachers at Umeå University focuses on finding the best possible expertise based on the needs of the University. It is an integral part of retaining and developing talent over the long term. Each department or unit is to draw up and regularly revise talent management and staff development strategies.

The University's needs, expressed in an employment profile, should guide the entire recruitment process. The recruitment process must be characterised by openness, transparency and fairness. The University is to conduct an impartial assessment of the merits of the applicants and only consider factual grounds in its assessment, i.e., merit and competence according to the Instrument of government (1974:152), of which competence has priority.

The central government's basic values underpin the University's activities. An equal opportunities perspective is to be considered throughout the recruitment process. This means that aspects included in the assessment of teaching, research and artistic activities may not disadvantage anyone regarding grounds for discrimination. This also means that processing committees, external experts and appointment committees are to have an equal gender representation unless there are extenuating circumstances (Chapter 4, Section 5 of the Higher Education Ordinance).

All appointments are to be advertised (announced) in an appropriate manner, unless there are special reasons for not doing so, pursuant to the Employment Ordinance (1994:373). When appointing professors by nomination, this information need not be given. All employment decisions must be posted on the official notice board of the government agency and may be appealed within three weeks of the decision being taken.

The basic principle for the appointment of teachers is that the post is normally for an indefinite period. Chapter 4 of the Higher Education Ordinance also regulates fixed-term employment for adjunct professors, visiting professors, assistant professors and teachers in artistic subjects.



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However, there may also be a need for fixed-term employment in circumstances other than those governed by the Higher Education Ordinance. For these cases, employment is pursuant to the Employment Protection Act (1982:80) or collective agreement.

Recruitment for a fixed-term employment must be done with the same care as for positions employed for an indefinite period, given that repeated fixed-term employment can result in automatic conversion into an indefinite employment, as specified in the Employment Protection Act (1982:80).

The rules on conflict of interest in the Administrative Procedure Act (2017:900) must always be considered. Everyone involved in teaching appointments or promotions at Umeå University that can be considered to influence the results of an appointment process is covered by the rules governing conflicts of interest. This includes not only the person who takes the decision, but also those who participate in the assessment or preparation, such as committee members, external experts, reporting officers, heads of department and other managers. The person for whom the conflict of interest applies must immediately recuse themselves.

### 3. The recruitment process when appointing teachers

#### 3.1 Needs analysis

The decision to initiate an employment procedure is taken by the department (head of department) or faculty or equivalent (dean).

The decision to initiate a recruitment process for a teaching post is to be preceded by information and cooperation in accordance with the University's local collective agreement, cooperation for development (FS 1.1-2040-17).

A recruitment panel is appointed once a decision is made to initiate recruitment of teaching staff, regardless of position. The department appoints the members of the recruitment panel, which can consist of the head of department or equivalent, teaching staff, an HR officer and, if necessary, other relevant expertise. The recruitment panel is to have a balanced representation of women and men unless there are exceptional reasons to deviate from this principle, and there must always be awareness of the risk of conflicts of interest. This means that the composition of the recruitment panel may need to be changed once the names of the applicants become known. The recruitment panel may formulate proposals for employment profiles, assist in the search for external experts and, if necessary, become involved in the recruitment process.



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A recruitment request may need to be submitted to the Dean before recruitment can begin. Each faculty decides which appointments are covered by the recruitment request, what it should contain and how it should be prepared.

### 3.2 Employment profile

Before recruiting teaching staff, an employment profile will be approved by the individual who has been delegated the right to decide the appointment to the teaching position. The employment profile for the appointment of a professor, including adjunct professors and visiting professors, is decided by the Vice-Chancellor following a proposal from the Dean.

The employment profile is to serve as the basis for the job advertisement and be the guiding factor in the ongoing recruitment. A well thought out employment profile optimises and improves the recruitment process through clear qualification requirements and assessment criteria, which facilitate the selection process. The Appointments procedure for teachers (FS 1.1-129-22) states that a general basis for assessing all teaching categories is both the good ability to cooperate and the expertise and suitability in other respects necessary to perform the tasks well. This means that the personal skills that are important should be stated in the employment profile.

### 3.3 Advertising

The subject content and any teaching and research duties, qualification requirements and weighting between the different assessment criteria, as formulated in the advertisement, must correspond with the text of the approved employment profile. A vacancy must always be advertised in Swedish, pursuant to the Language Act (2009:600), and should also be made available in English. All appointments must be advertised (announced) in an appropriate manner, unless there are special reasons for not doing so, pursuant to the Employment Ordinance (1994:373).

The special reasons are:

- if there are employees in need of relocation who have sufficient qualifications for the vacant post pursuant to Section 7:2 of the Employment Protection Act (1982:80), the vacancy is not to be advertised.
- in the event of extension of employment as a doctoral student pursuant to Chapter 5, Section 7 of the Higher Education Ordinance, the appointment is not to be advertised.



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- when appointing a professor by nomination pursuant to Chapter 4, Section 7 of the Higher Education Ordinance, the appointment is not to be advertised.
- if there are employees who have requested preferential rights to re-employment or to increase their employment rate pursuant to Section 25 of the Employment Protection Act (1982:80), and they have sufficient qualifications for the vacancy, the appointment need not be advertised.
- if there are individuals taking part in support from the Swedish Job Security Foundation pursuant to Section 6 of the Employment Ordinance (1994:373), the appointment need not be advertised.

Umeå University provides information about vacancies on its official notice board, on the University's website and through registration with the Swedish Public Employment Service. In addition, advertising can be placed nationally or internationally in various media to achieve good coverage of the target group. The application period normally should be at least three weeks but may be extended if necessary.

### 3.3.1 Advertising for a position as lecturer

The Vice-Chancellor's decision-making and delegation of authority stipulates that the Vice-Chancellor decides on an exemption for advertising the post of lecturer. Some programmes still need employment of lecturers, for example in courses and programmes where a teacher's specific professional expertise is important. Special grounds must be present for the Vice-Chancellor to grant an exemption for advertising the post of lecturer. The special grounds for advertisement are whether, based on the quality and feasibility of the course or programme and for subject matter-specific reasons, it is justified in an individual case to appoint a lecturer. See the procedure for the appointment of a lecturer (FS 1.1-2200-16).

## 3.4 Applications

A full application for employment as a teacher must contain:

- personal letter including contact details
- CV
- list of publications
- presentation of scientific or creative and artistic subjects
- presentation of educational activities
- presentation of development and leadership of organisations and staff



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- presentation of public outreach and popular science activities
- declaration of intent (research programme) concerning scientific activities (mainly for research-oriented positions)
- certified copies of relevant degree certificates and diplomas
- list of specifically cited scientific and educational work
- references including contact details.

Depending on the position, requirements for what is included in an application may need to be adjusted.

The Vice-Chancellor or Dean may decide on further instructions for the application. Applicants may only invoke scientific publications published or presented as manuscripts (but not manuscripts of doctoral theses) no later than the end of the application period. An application or an addition to an application that has been submitted late may be considered if there are special reasons for doing so.

### 3.5 Preparation of appointment matters

#### 3.5.1 Responsibilities and organisation

Each faculty is to have at least one appointment committee to prepare teacher appointments. The faculty board informs the faculty's appointment committee which teacher appointments to prepare, determines what authority the appointment committee has, decides on the number of committee members and deputy members, and appoints individuals to the committee.

A chair, vice-chair and additional members are appointed to the appointment committee, and there is to be equal gender representation. Deans cannot be appointed as chairs of an appointment committee within their own faculty. Students have the right to appoint at least one member. Teaching staff representatives are appointed for four years and student representatives are appointed for at least one but no more than three years. The appointment committee has a quorum when more than half of its members are present, including the chair or vice-chair. Any conflicts of interest are investigated on a case-by-case basis, and the assessment is reported in each case.

The duties of the appointment committee consist of preparing and submitting proposals for decisions about appointments. This work includes assessing the supporting information for proposed appointments. The supporting information consists of reports from external experts. Additional information that should be weighed are interviews, references



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and trial lectures or other trial teaching, unless there are special reasons not to do so. The appointment committee decides on which selection instruments/methods to use.

The relevant head of department or another person appointed by the head of department as a department representative may attend and make statements at the appointment committee meetings. To achieve as objective an assessment as possible, the head of department or the appointed representative of the department is not to report to or have a decision-making role on the appointment committee.

Teaching appointments not handled by appointment committees are prepared in accordance with the respective faculty's delegation of authority.

### 3.5.2 External experts

When appointing professors (including adjunct professors), assessment of the applicants' expertise is to be obtained from at least two external experts, unless it is clearly unnecessary for assessment of the applicant's expertise. An equal number of women and men are to be among the external experts. This does not, however, apply if there are specific grounds not to do so, see Chapter 4, Sections 5–6 of the Higher Education Ordinance. Decisions on the appointment of external experts must indicate whether it has been possible to appoint experts of both sexes.

At Umeå University, an external expert procedure is also to be used for appointment of associate professors, assistant professors and research fellows, for promotions and when appointing a professor by nomination. Assessment of teaching expertise must be given the same care as research and artistic expertise. In special cases, the Dean may decide that external expert assessment is manifestly unnecessary, for example, if an applicant's suitability has recently been assessed in another context.

#### 3.5.2.2 The task of external experts

The task of external experts is to examine and assess the applicant's competence in the areas specified for the position (to assess the research, teaching, clinical or artistic expertise of the qualified applicant). External expert assessments provide valuable guidance in the decision-making process, but external experts do not decide who is chosen. Based on their expert assessment, the external experts provide an assessment of those who primarily should be considered for appointment and a ranking. External experts are to be given the opportunity to attend and speak at recruitment interviews.

Preparations for the case should give the same care to the assessment of research expertise as of the teaching, clinical or artistic expertise. External experts with special teaching competencies may be used in the assessment of teaching expertise.





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To carry out their duties, the external experts need access to the following information:

- the appointment procedure for teachers at Umeå University
- the job advertisement/employment profile
- list of applicants
- the applicants' application documents
- faculty-specific documents and appointment guidelines
- draft timetable
- the remuneration form for the external expert assignment.

The Dean may decide on further instructions for the external experts. The Dean decides on the level of payment for the assignment.

### 3.5.2.3 Simplified external expert procedure

Excerpt from the Appointments procedure for teachers at Umeå University (FS 1.1-57-18):

An external expert procedure can take time, which may mean that situations arise when need for competence must be met at short notice. To reduce negative consequences for the organisation, an external expert procedure may need to be simplified or ruled out. This applies when such a need for competence has arisen due to temporary absence, such as illness, leave of absence at short notice, or absence for other special reasons.

A simplified external expert procedure may not be applied in the appointment of a professor (including adjunct professor), see Chapter 4, Section 6 of the Higher Education Ordinance.

A simplified external expert procedure or deviation from the requirement of an external expert procedure may be applied in the following cases upon fixed-term appointments to avoid such negative consequences for the organisation.

A simplified external expert procedure may be applied for fixed-term employment of teaching staff of up to 12 months. A simplified external expert procedure means that a docent or professor within the field and from within or outside the department is assigned to assess the applicant and make suggestions to the Dean of candidates to be appointed for the fixed-term position. The risk of conflicts of interest must be considered, particularly when appointing an associate



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professor or professor from within the field. Appointments made through simplified external expert procedures may not be extended.

Exceptions from using an external expert procedure may be applied for appointments of teachers for a maximum of six months. An appointment made without an external expert procedure may not be extended.

The appointments referred to above, with a simplified or omitted external expert procedure, may be combined for a period of up to 12 months.

### 3.5.3 Interview, reference checks and trial lecture or other selection methods

The appointment committees are responsible for and lead the selection process.

Good quality interviews and reference checks require careful preparation and that they be conducted in a structured manner and be documented. It may be appropriate to draw up a standardised model for interview and reference checks to make it easier to compare candidates.

Interviews should be conducted with the candidates judged by the external experts to be the most competent, unless there are special reasons for not doing so. The interview gives the committee the opportunity to gain a clearer picture of each candidate's expertise and to assess the candidate's personal abilities.

A trial lecture or trial teaching of some kind can serve as a complement to the written documentation of merits. It provides a significant contribution to the material for assessing the teaching and research expertise and should be held unless there are special reasons not to. The external experts have the right to attend and speak at trial lectures and interviews with the applicants.

The purpose of reference checks is to supplement what has been learnt so far and to obtain further information for assessing the applicant. The reference must be informed that the information provided may need to be confirmed and that the name of the reference may be documented. The documentation requirement is the same as for an interview and a trial lecture, that is, all provided information used as the basis for the decision must be documented and added to the case documentation. Reference checks should be done close to the time of the interview.

### 3.5.4 Nomination

A higher education institution may, in accordance with Chapter 4, Section 7 of the Higher Education Ordinance, nominate an individual for an



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appointment as professor if the appointment of the individual is of exceptional importance for a specific activity at the institution. The nomination procedure is to be used very restrictively. If a higher education institution nominates an individual for a post, the grounds on which the appointment is of exceptional importance for the institution must be noted in the official record. Only professors may be appointed through nomination. The decision is made by the Vice-Chancellor and may not be delegated. When an appointment is made by nomination, no information of the kind laid down in the first paragraph of Section 6 of the Employment Ordinance (1994:373) need be submitted. The provisions regarding external experts found in Chapter 4, Section 6 of the Higher Education Ordinance must apply.

Nomination of a professor is initiated at faculty level when the Dean obtains the Vice-Chancellor's permission to initiate a nomination procedure by making the request as described below. After preparatory work, the Dean submits a request for the nomination of a professor to the Vice-Chancellor. Once the Vice-Chancellor has approved initiation of the nomination procedure, further preparatory work will take place in the faculty's appointment committee.

The request must include:

- a needs analysis showing the reasons why the appointment is of particular importance to the University and why nomination is justified for the appointment
- funding plan
- draft employment profile
- report on existing research or artistic expertise in the field in relation to the expertise the proposed professor has in the field
- report on gender equality perspective considerations
- certification that the qualification requirements for appointment to a professorship have been assessed. If an opinion on appointment eligibility has been obtained, it must be attached
- proof that conflicts of interest have been examined prior to proceeding. Meeting minutes must be attached if there has been reason for a special review of potential conflict of interest.

### 3.6 Appointment decision

After the appointment committee has prepared the appointment case, it proposes who to offer the appointment to. The supporting documentation consists of the committee's consideration of the external expert assessment,



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a report from reference checks and, where appropriate, documentation from interviews and assessments of trial lectures or other trial teaching.

The appointment decision and terms of employment for teaching staff is made in accordance with the delegation of authority from the Vice-Chancellor and Dean, respectively. The appointment must be discussed in the faculty's collaborative group (FSG) and thereafter made public. All applicants must be notified of the decision, including information on how to appeal.

### 3.7 Appeals

Appointment decisions may be appealed by the person or persons who are subject to a contrary decision. An appeal is lodged with the Higher Education Appeals Board and should be submitted to Umeå University, who will assess whether the appeal has been received within the prescribed time (within three weeks after the decision has been made public). The University will not examine the substance of the appeal but will promptly refer the matter to the Higher Education Appeals Board if the appeal has been received in due time. The Higher Education Appeals Board may obtain a statement of opinion from Umeå University to gain necessary information for its decision. Statements of opinion are provided by the Vice-Chancellor.

Appointment decisions at a higher education institution and decisions under Chapter 4, Section 13 of the Higher Education Ordinance, on the rejection of an application for promotion, may be appealed to the Higher Education Appeals Board in the cases specified in Chapter 12, Section 2 of the Higher Education Ordinance.

Decisions about the appointment of associate professors, when applying for promotion from assistant professor to associate professor, cannot be appealed.

### 3.8 Cancellation of appointment proceedings

A decision to cancel an appointment procedure is taken in accordance with the applicable delegation of authority. Such a decision may not be appealed, see Section 21 of the Employment Ordinance (1994:373).

Decisions to cancel an appointment procedure must be taken based on objective grounds but does not need to be explained. The objective grounds for cancellation of a recruitment procedure may include the pursuit of persons with the best possible qualifications, while the remaining applicants do not meet that requirement. Objective grounds could also be lack of funding and organisational changes that could not be foreseen at the start of the appointment procedure. Applicants must be informed as soon as possible of the cancellation of the recruitment process.