

Guidelines for expert assessment of candidates for professorship at the University of Stavanger

Adopted by the Board of the University of Stavanger, November 27, 2008.

1 AREA OF APPLICATION

Guidelines for expert assessment of candidates for professorship at the University of Stavanger (UiS) are prepared pursuant to the Higher Education Act (Uhl) § 6-3 No. 3

The provisions apply to employment in all professor positions (including adjunct professors) where the appointing authority is conferred on the university.

UiS wants to hire scientific staff that will conduct research, teaching and dissemination tasks with excellence. The provisions have been prepared in order to ensure the quality of appointments.

2 REGULATIONS

Uhl § 6-3 No. 3 deals with the assessment of applicants to teaching and research positions:

"Appointments to teaching and research positions are made on the basis of recommendation. Recommendation is based on expert evaluation of the job description given in the advertisement. The committee on appointments may decide that interviews, test lectures or other screening procedures can also be used. The committee on appointments may in special cases decide that the requirement for expert assessment may be waived for teaching and research positions that are not associate or full professorships. Both genders must be represented in an expert committee in order to secure gender equality. When evaluating positions in which requirements for pedagogical qualifications apply, the committee must give a separate assessment of whether the applicants meet these. The Board will adopt further regulations concerning assessment (see the sixth paragraph)."

Pursuant to Uhl § 6-3 No. 6, regulations for appointment and promotion to teaching and research positions have been prepared. The regulations give, among other things, criteria for appointment to professorships, see section 5

The University has adopted its own rules for the evaluation and weighting of pedagogical competence for appointments to permanent academic positions assigned to teaching, see section 5.3.

3 APPOINTMENT OF THE EXPERT COMMITTEE

Applicants will be assessed by an expert committee that prepares an assessment of the applicants' qualifications for professorships. The assessment provides the basis for the university's opinion and appointment to the position. The Rector appoints the committee on the recommendation of the dean.

If there is only one applicant to the position, who, in the course of six years from the application deadline, have been declared competent for a professorship in the same field as advertised, the committee on appointments can give a recommendation without a new expert evaluation on the condition that the earlier competence assessment was unanimous, and beyond doubt. (In accordance with the Regulations § 2-1 No. 13)

3.1 Requirements for the composition of the expert committee

The expert committee for academic assessment of applicants for professorships shall be composed as follows:

- a) At least three experts having professor or equivalent qualifications in key areas of the discipline must be appointed. By "equivalent skills" is meant documented scientific production that extends substantially beyond a Ph.D. in the relevant discipline.

- b) The committee must be so composed that it is competent to consider all applicants covered by the announcement.
- c) Only one of the experts may be employed at the UiS. An adjunct professor at UiS is regarded as an internal expert.
- d) As far as is possible, and where academic fields make it relevant, at least one of the experts must come from another country.
- e) Both genders must be represented on the committee. A thorough search nationally and internationally must be made before concluding that it has not been possible to obtain a female (male) member of the committee with sufficient scientific expertise in key areas of discipline. If this proves to be impossible, the committee on appointment must, in its submission of proposals for members of the expert committee, explain what has been done in order to appoint a committee in which both genders are represented.
- f) In addition to the experts and possibly at the suggestion of these, there may, in special cases, be hired one or more special experts to evaluate parts of the materials submitted by the applicant. The special experts give individual assessments, submitted as guidance for the expert committee. The requirement for equal gender representation does not apply to the appointment of special experts.

An administrator from the university will be appointed to coordinate the work and ensure progress. Normally this will be the internal member of the committee.

3.2 Impartiality

The expert committee must be composed so that objections based on impartiality cannot be raised, (Cf. Administration Act § 6.)

As far as possible it must be ascertained that the experts do not have close ties to any of the applicants or have any special advantage or disadvantage in assessing any of them. However, acquaintance with applicants does not mean that one is partial.

When expert committees are put together, supervisor relationship or close scientific cooperation including co-authorship must be considered. In such cases the committee's assessment must contain a brief account of the questions that have been discussed and the conclusions drawn. In case of doubt or conflict of interest the faculty must be informed.

Both those who propose the experts and those who will be or have been appointed have the responsibility to speak out about any special relationship that might undermine confidence in the impartiality of the experts. Such assessment will always be discretionary.

3.3 Working method and deadline

The experts will normally work as a committee and issue a joint statement. The appointed administrator coordinates the committee's work and ensures its progress.

The experts' assessment must normally be available within three months after their appointment. If the assessment cannot be delivered on time, the faculty will require an explanation.

Expert assessment is based on the applicants' submissions and documented work.

4 MANDATE FOR THE EXPERT COMMITTEE

The experts will conduct an overall assessment of all applicants on the basis of the submitted material and rank the applicants deemed qualified according to the job description (announcement and commentary).

The committee will not comment on issues of equality, rights, personal fitness etc.

4.1 Content of expert assessment

In their assessment of applicants the experts will:

- a. Give a brief description of all applicants.
- b. Compare the applicants' qualifications with the requirements given in the job description (announcement and comments) and identify the applicants who are qualified for the position.
- c. Make a thorough assessment of the written work and the competence of the qualified applicants and comment on what distinguishes them in terms of scientific / technical expertise in accordance with the job description. The applicants' productivity over the past five years must be considered explicitly.
- d. Rank the applicants who, after an overall assessment in accordance with the job description, are deemed best qualified for the position. In the ranking, the main emphasis must be on submitted scientific work, but the experts should also take into account other academic / professional qualifications, educational qualifications, dissemination and other qualifying activities. The ranking must be justified on the basis of the crucial factors.

In case of dissent in the committee, the reasons for the different positions must be stated.

4.2 Assessment basis

Applicants will be evaluated on:

- a. Scientific / artistic merit. Research, initiative, development/management of research projects/groups or participation in such work. Contribution to innovation based on research and professional development.
- b. Pedagogical qualifications. The applicants' pedagogical qualifications must be given special consideration and evaluation in the report. The assessment is done according to the university's "Rules for evaluation and weighting of pedagogical competence in appointments to permanent academic positions that involve teaching/instruction."
- c. Qualifications for external professional activities (dissemination). Documented work to disseminate information about scientific methods and results.
- d. Other professional qualifications required or emphasized in the job description.
- e. Generation and management of projects.
- f. Qualifications for management and administration. Education and experience in administration and management including experience from relevant positions will be emphasized.
- g. Other activities that, based on the job description, are required and/or considered qualifying. The assessment is based on submitted material and documented work.

The main emphasis in the overall assessment of applicants must be on submitted scientific work/documentated artistic activities. Special emphasis will be put on the quality of these activities and the professional scope they document.

For adjunct professor positions, research management and research documented in other ways than through traditional publishing should be given greater weight when the research is of high quality and the documented expertise is relevant for the position.

4.3 Qualification position

If the advertisement opens for temporary employment in a qualifying position with a view to qualification and tenure, the expert committee must state its opinion on whether the applicant, currently not qualified for permanent employment, is considered capable of acquiring the required skills within the specified time (two to three years).

This is especially important if there are applicants who do not fully meet the requirements for professorial expertise in the field.

5 GENERAL CRITERIA FOR APPOINTMENT TO PROFESSORSHIPS

Regulations on appointment and promotion to teaching and research positions (§ 1-2) contain the following criteria for appointment to professorships:

"(1) Academic level must be in accordance with established international or national standards

or

(2) Comprehensive artistic activity at the highest level must be in accordance with international standards and relevant scope and depth of field or discipline at the highest level

and

(3) Documented relevant pedagogical competence on the basis of education or training and guidance. "

The university's elaboration of the general criteria are set down in chapter 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3.

Specific requirements for each position are stated in the announcement and job description.

5.1 Academic competence

The requirement of scientific level sufficient for professorships is often expressed in different ways and can vary from field to field. At UiS the following requirements apply:

- a. A major work or a collection of scientific publications equivalent to a doctorate of high quality within the advertised academic field.
- b. A major work or a collection of scientific publications equivalent to a doctorate of high quality relevant to the advertised academic field that differs from point 1 with respect to theoretical and/or methodological approach. This/these work (s) should also show progress.
- c. Work and research, relevant to the advertised position, reflecting the applicant's orientation and familiarity within the field. It is important that these works have been published (accepted) in good peer reviewed international journals.

Applicants should have published scientific work that has attracted some interest in national, preferably international, research communities by having been cited or quoted in other scientific works, etc.

In assessing the work one ought to consider the time factor and the progress of the applicants' scientific production. Recent works should receive more attention than and the "old" production.

In order to be appointed to professorships applicants must be able to document active ongoing research at a high scientific level, unless there are good reasons for having had lower scientific output in recent times.

5.2 Artistic qualifications

To be appointed to professorships on the basis of artistic skills, the applicant must document extensive artistic activity at the highest level by international standards and relevant breadth and depth in the field or discipline.

The requirement of breadth, for example, could involve repertoire breadth (for performing artists) and stylistic breadth (for composers), but also documentation of other academic or technical skill at a high level linked to artistic work.

For some positions, a combination of scientific and artistic skills will be relevant. Competence must be at a professorial level in both the scientific and artistic activities. The range of activities within each field, as documented in the application, may be narrower, but the extent of the overall scientific and artistic activities must correspond to the requirements for a professorship.

In addition to assessing the overall artistic production (with special emphasis on selected works), particular attention must be given to the applicants' artistic activity in the last five to ten years. Whether the applicants' academic activity in recent years has increased, stagnated or declined must be assessed.

Documentation of creative and artistic skills may include:

- Artistic original work
- Photographs, audiovisual recordings, etc.
- Publications based on the applicant's creative and performing art
- Programs, catalogs, and reviews in reputable publications of concerts, exhibitions, performances, stage productions, etc.
- Artistic prizes, purchases and commissions

5.3 Pedagogical competence

For appointment to professorships documented relevant pedagogical competence on the basis of education, training or supervision is required.

The university rules for the assessment of pedagogical competence for appointments to tenured academic positions assigned to teaching give the following description of the required educational qualifications:

"Educational qualifications include excellence in planning, implementation and evaluation of teaching. Such qualifications are partly present in the teachers' personal performance, but also in the efforts to facilitate learning opportunities in their own department and in the support and stimulus to the colleagues in their teaching. Qualifications can also be observed in research and development relating to study and teaching as well as in popularization and information activities.

Like research, teaching cannot be considered solely as a technical skill. It is also a qualification to be able to explain and reflect on teaching practices in the light of relevant educational theory and systematic experience. "

Educational qualifications can be documented in the following ways:

- Teacher training
- Teaching (at different levels and in varied forms), examination work
- Research supervision at master and doctorate levels
- Planning, evaluation and development of teaching
- Writing of textbooks, participation in textbook projects or other teaching material
- Student administration, preparation of reports
- Research and development work