

28.6.2024

Faculty of Education and Culture

GUIDELINES FOR APPLYING FOR THE TITLE OF DOCENT**Title of docent**

Under Article 89 of the Universities Act (558/2009), the university may grant the title of docent to an applicant who has comprehensive expertise in their field, the ability to independently conduct research or artistic work as demonstrated by publications or by other means, and good teaching skills.

The President of Tampere University may grant the title of docent to an applicant with a doctoral degree and comprehensive expertise in their field, the ability to independently conduct research or artistic work as demonstrated by publications or by other means, and good teaching skills (President's decision February 12, 2019).

Requirements for the title of docent

Tampere University has outlined the following academic requirements for the title of docent:

- a doctoral degree or equivalent artistic achievements
- comprehensive expertise in one's field
- the ability to independently conduct scientific research or artistic work as demonstrated by publications or by other means
- a significant scientific or artistic body of work, primarily after doctoral thesis (it is not advised to apply for the title of docent at a very early stage of one's career)
- good teaching skills

For a justified reason, the title of docent may be granted to a Tampere University employee who meets the requirements.

When reviewing applications, the Faculty of Education and Culture also considers the relevance of the field of the title of docent and the collaboration potential with regard to the research and teaching of the Faculty as well as how the applicant's scientific activities fit the Faculty's research profile.

The holders of the title of docent of the Faculty of Education and Culture are required to have existing collaboration or potential for collaboration with the Faculty's research and teaching staff.

The applicant is expected to have a vision for how they will develop the research of the field of applied title of docent in collaboration with the Faculty and how they will strive for scientific impact nationally and internationally.

The applicant's activities for advancing open science will be considered an advantage.

The applicant's societal interaction with actors of the field and the societal impact of their research will be considered an advantage.

The holders of the title of docent of the Faculty of Education and Culture will be required to present their research at the Faculty's events or provide other scientific contribution at least once after being awarded the title of docent.

[Tampere University adheres to the national recommendation for the responsible evaluation of a researcher \(Good practice in researcher evaluation\).](#)

Applying for the title of docent

It is required that before applying for the title of docent, the applicant contacts the Faculty's Vice Dean for Research. It is also advised that the applicant discusses future potential collaboration with Faculty members.

The applicant submits a free-form application letter addressed to the President of Tampere University. The application should clearly state the field of the applied title of docent in Finnish and in English. We recommend the application to be submitted in English if most of the publications are international.

The application letter should include the following attachments:

1. A CV which complies with the guidelines of the Finnish National Board of Research Integrity (<https://tenk.fi/en/advice-and-materials/template-researchers-curriculum-vitae>).
2. A copy of doctoral degree certificate.
3. A list of publications which complies with the guidelines of the Academy of Finland (<https://www.aka.fi/en/research-funding/apply-for-funding/how-to-apply-for-funding/az-index-of-application-guidelines2/list-of-publications/>). On the list, mark the publications that are a part of your dissertation.
4. A written statement (2–3 pages) which includes descriptions of:
 - the applicant's main achievements and activities relevant to the applied title of docent after their doctoral degree and their ability to independently conduct research,
 - an estimation of the necessity and relevance of the field of the title of docent to the Faculty's research and other activities as well as descriptions of collaboration with the Faculty or plans for potential collaboration with the Faculty,
 - description of why the development of the applied field of the title of docent is significant nationally and internationally, how the applicant wants to advance the field and why the applicant has chosen to apply for the title at the Faculty of Education and Culture of Tampere University,
 - description of the applicant's activities to advance open science,
 - description of the applicant's activities in societal interaction and impact.
5. A teaching portfolio (5 pages maximum) drafted according to the instructions in the section Evaluation of teaching competence and guidelines for teaching demonstration of these guidelines.
6. A copy of a previous teaching competence evaluation report, if the applicant has been evaluated in the past five years and the grade is good or better.
7. 10 publications which the applicant wishes to be considered in the evaluation of their scientific competence for the title of docent. The applicant must be the first author in at least half of the publications and some of the publications must be international. The publications must be linked to the field of the title of docent. The publications must not include the doctoral dissertation or its partial publications. If necessary, the applicant will be requested to provide translations of the publications for the evaluation.
8. A list of the aforementioned publications and short descriptions for each publication's contribution to the applied field of the title of docent and its development (write the description in English if the publication is in Finnish or in another language). If the applicant has not been the first author, the contribution to the publication must be described.

The attachments are named according to the number of the attachment, the last name of the applicant and the name of the attachment (e.g. 1_Lastname_CV). The application and its attachments are combined into a single file with bookmarks for each file name.

We request publications in PDF format, scanned if necessary. Combine the publications into a single file with bookmarks for each file name (incl. the publication's number on the list of publications delivered for evaluation).

The application and its attachments will be submitted **electronically** to edu-docents.tau@tuni.fi. If the files are too large to submit via email, please contact us and we will provide a link to a cloud folder to which you can upload your application.

Further information:

Vice Dean for Research, contact information on the [website of the Faculty of Education and Culture](#)

Team handling the applications for the title of docent: edu-docents.tau@tuni.fi

Granting the title of docent:

- The applicant contacts the Faculty's staff in order to map out collaboration potential if necessary. The applicant contacts the Vice Dean for Research and discusses applying for the title of docent, the language of the application, the field and its necessity with regard to the Faculty.
- The applicant submits the application to the Faculty. The applications will be handled in the Working Group on Research Development approximately four times per academic year.
- The Vice Dean for Research decides who provides the Faculty's internal necessity statement and consults the Working Group on Research Development if necessary. The provider of the necessity statement proposes expert candidates for the expert evaluation.
- The Working Group on Research Development evaluates the application and the significance of the applied title of docent for the Faculty's research and other activities as well as the possible need to specify the field of the title of docent based on the application and the necessity statement. If necessary, the Working Group on Research Development may refine and specify the field of the title of docent now or at a later phase. The possible change of the field will be approved by the applicant.
- If the Working Group on Research Development considers the title of docent necessary and deems the field relevant to Faculty activities, it will propose at least two internationally renowned experts to the Dean. The Dean will decide the experts. The external experts must meet the eligibility requirements set out in Section 28 of the Finnish Administrative Procedure Act (434/2003). The applicant will be given the opportunity to comment on any conflicts of interest regarding the experts under the Administrative Procedure Act (434/2003).
- If the experts have provided clearly favourable statements on the applicant's scientific competence for the title of docent, the applicant's teaching and guidance competence will be evaluated. The applicant is considered to possess the good

teaching skills required from a holder of title of docent if the applicant's teaching skills are evaluated as good based on the teaching demonstration and other teaching merits.

- As part of the evaluation of teaching competence, the applicant will give a teaching demonstration, unless the applicant has been exempted from giving one. The Working Group on Research Development may exempt the applicant from providing a teaching demonstration if the applicant provides a certificate of an evaluation of their teaching competence (good or better) that is no older than 5 years and the applicant's teaching competence can be confirmed to be good based on the teaching portfolio. The teaching demonstration is public and evaluated by the Working Group on Research Development, which may invite additional experts to the evaluation.
- If the Working Group on Research Development, based on the application documents and expert statements as well as the evaluation of teaching competence, deems that the applicant is scientifically competent for the title of docent, the Working Group will make a proposal to the Dean for granting the title of docent. The Working Group must provide specific reasons for granting the title of docent if the applicant is a Faculty employee.
- The Dean will make a proposal to the President on granting the title of docent, and the President will grant the title of docent upon the proposal of the Dean.
- The decision will be communicated to the applicant.
- The Faculty Council and Faculty community will be informed of the decision to grant the title of docent. It will also be updated to the University's website with the consent of the applicant.
- The applicant will be invited to present their research at the Faculty's events or provide other scientific contribution after being awarded the title of docent.

The expert statements

Granting the title of docent requires clearly favourable statements from two experts in the relevant field who are external to the Faculty. Expert statements can be requested from both Finnish and international experts. If the field of the title of the docent requires an international evaluation, the application documents will be requested in English, if necessary.

When evaluating the applicant's scientific competence, a general requirement is that the applicant has, in addition to their doctoral dissertation, published research which demonstrates their ability to independently conduct research. This means publications which at a minimum correspond to the requirements and scope of a doctoral dissertation, including international publications. The publications must significantly expand on or deepen the research field of the applicant's doctoral dissertation or the applicant's scientific research activities.

When evaluating the competence of an applicant for the title of docent, experts must consider the field of research and the possible specification of the field of the title of docent. Experts may focus on the applicant's main activities and body of work and

briefly evaluate other publications and/or works in their statements. The recommended length of the statement is 2–5 pages.

The experts must also note that [Tampere University adheres to the national recommendation for the responsible evaluation of a researcher \(Good practice in researcher evaluation\)](#). For example, the evaluation of scientific publications is based on their quality and not on publication metrics.

THE EVALUATION OF TEACHING COMPETENCE AND GUIDELINES FOR TEACHING DEMONSTRATION

Under Article 89 of the Universities Act, the university may grant the title of docent to an applicant who possesses comprehensive expertise in their field, the ability to independently conduct research or artistic work as demonstrated by publications or by other means, and **good teaching skills**.

The presentation of teaching merits in the teaching portfolio that is attached to the application letter

Teaching merits must be presented according to the following structure:

1. Views on teaching and education philosophy
 - views on learning, teaching, guidance and their theory
2. Pedagogical education and pedagogical skills
 - pedagogical education
 - continuous development of teaching skills
 - awards and acknowledgements received for good teaching performance
 - other merits
3. Practical experience in teaching and guidance
 - activities as a teacher (teaching positions/roles) and an educator: the quality and quantity of tasks
 - bachelor's, master's and doctoral thesis supervision
 - special duties in doctoral education
 - participation in the evaluation of teaching
4. Educational leadership
 - leadership of teaching and education projects
 - responsibility for modules and activities
5. The development of teaching and guidance competence
 - taught courses
 - supervised theses
 - activities as teacher tutor/personal study plan counsellor
 - the usage of teaching methods
 - the production of research-based teaching materials
 - teaching and guidance practices that promote students' learning and skills
6. Community-based teaching development
 - cooperation with teachers, students and working life
 - cross-scientific cooperation
 - curriculum work

- international activities
- pedagogical leadership

7. Other teaching merits

- the evaluations/appraisals of previous teaching demonstrations
- analysed student feedback; peer reviews; the utilisation of feedback in teaching and other activities
- honours and awards received for teaching

The portfolio on teaching merits should be five (5) pages maximum, and the information must be reliably documented.

The evaluation is comprehensive, with a special focus on

- the applicant's views on teaching, learning and guidance and the applicant's pedagogical education
- practical activities and experience in teaching and guidance
- the independent and community-based development of teaching and guidance activities
- the evaluations of teaching and guidance activities

Evaluation of teaching competence and teaching demonstration

Once the experts have provided clearly favourable statements on the applicant's scientific competence for the title of docent, the applicant's teaching and guidance competence will be evaluated. The applicant is considered to possess the good teaching skills required from a holder of title of docent if the applicant's teaching skills are evaluated as good based on the teaching demonstration and other teaching merits.

As part of the evaluation of teaching competence, the applicant will give a teaching demonstration, unless the applicant has been exempted from giving one. The Working Group on Research Development may exempt the applicant from providing a teaching demonstration if the applicant provides a certificate of an evaluation of their teaching competence (good or better) that is no older than 5 years and the applicant's teaching competence can be confirmed to be good based on the teaching portfolio.

The teaching demonstration is public and evaluated by the Working Group on Research Development, which may invite additional experts to the evaluation.

The applicant chooses the topic and language of their teaching demonstration and the degree level of the imagined target audience. The Working Group on Research Development decides whether the teaching demonstration will be organised remotely or on campus. The applicant must announce the topic of the teaching demonstration by the provided deadline. The duration of the teaching demonstration is 20 minutes.

Decisions concerning the application of the guidelines for teaching demonstrations are made by the Working Group on Research Development, which can also provide divergent or complementary instructions if necessary.

The assessment of a teaching demonstration

The evaluation of a teaching demonstration focuses on the mastery of scientific subject matter in relation to the field of the title of docent, the topic of the demonstration and the imagined target audience, the pedagogical skills of the applicant and the success of the implementation.

In addition, the evaluation of a teaching demonstration focuses on the structure and the method of presentation. In practice, the focus is on the applicant's performance with regards to:

- explaining the topic to their audience
- providing arguments and examining analytically the presented ideas and claims
- structuring the context of learning and interaction
- pedagogising their scientific expertise (by utilising up-to-date research data)
- acting in an encouraging, thought-provoking and interactive manner

The current criteria for assessing teaching competence of the University is used in evaluating the teaching demonstration. A failed demonstration or a demonstration evaluated with the lowest grade cannot be compensated by other teaching merits, but the Working Group on Research Development may give the applicant one retake opportunity. If an applicant refuses or fails to be present without an acceptable reason on the date of the demonstration, of which they have been informed within a reasonable time, the teaching demonstration will be considered failed.