

Faculty of Science
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Guidelines for applying for the title of docent at the Faculty of Science

Awarding the title of docent

Upon application, a university may award the title of docent (dosentti in Finnish) to a person who has comprehensive knowledge of his or her field, a capacity for independent research or artistic work demonstrated through publications or some other manner, and good teaching skills (Universities Act 558/2009, 89 §).

The title of docent is awarded by the rector on the recommendation of the faculty council. All docentships are at the University of Turku and not at individual faculties or departments. The University of Turku has guidelines on the title of docent and how it is awarded. (13.6.2013, dnro 259/002/2013). The faculty guidelines supplement the university's general guidelines.

The title of docent is primarily considered a sign of academic competence. The title of docent may also be granted to a person already serving as a professor. It is not appropriate to grant more than one docent title to the same person at the University of Turku. The title of docent is granted for an indefinite period, and a docent may continue to use the title even after reaching retirement age and also continue their research work in the capacity of docent. It is not necessary for an emeritus professor who wishes to maintain contact with the University of Turku to apply for the title of docent. An emeritus agreement may be made with a professor who is retiring on a statutory old-age pension and who continues his academic activities for the university.

Eligibility requirements

Scientific competence

A docent must have thorough knowledge of their field and demonstrate, through publications or other means, an ability to conduct independent scientific research. In the assessment of scientific competence, an applicant for the title of docent must meet the minimum requirements for publications in their field. In addition, experience in leading scientific research and experience in international cooperation in the field of science represented by the applicant will be taken into account. A docent is required to have broader and more thorough scientific competence than a doctor in the field. Applicants must therefore have deepened and broadened their research experience and mastery of the subject beyond what is required for a doctoral dissertation. The research work of a docent must demonstrate significant merit in relation to the doctoral dissertation. An applicant must specify their own contribution to joint publications in their application documents. An applicant must demonstrate through their publication activity that their research in the field covered by the docent title has been long-term and continues to be active.

A statement on the applicant's academic competence must be provided by at least two experts unless, for a specific reason, the statements are considered unnecessary (University of Turku Rules of Procedure, section 42).

Good teaching skills

Docents are required to have good teaching skills. Teaching skills can be demonstrated in many ways. When assessing them, factors such as pedagogical training, teaching experience, feedback on teaching, teaching materials produced by the applicant, and a demonstration lecture given by the applicant to demonstrate their teaching skills are taken into account. Teaching skills must be rated as good in the overall assessment.

As a rule, an applicant for a docentship is required to give a demonstration lecture, which is presented to the department's educational development working group. However, an applicant may be exempted from giving a demonstration lecture if they have significant teaching experience, if giving a teaching demonstration would be unreasonably difficult, or if they have previously given an approved teaching demonstration at the University of Turku within a reasonable period of time (less than five years). The need for a teaching demonstration is particularly influenced by the information provided by the applicant in their application regarding their teaching skills and the possibilities for assessing whether the applicant has the good teaching skills required of a docent. Applicant must carefully describe their teaching merits in their CV and teaching portfolio.

The faculty has separate guidelines for assessing teaching skills and demonstration lectures.

Application

The matter is initiated at the university by submitting a written application for the title of docent at the University of Turku. A written, free-form application addressed to the rector of the University of Turku for the title of docent, with attachments, is submitted to the Faculty of Science by email sci@utu.fi and Hr Secretary Sirpa Kelosto (sirpa.kelosto@utu.fi)

The application must include the applicant's contact details, the field of the docentship being applied for, and the applicant's view of the significance of the docentship for research, teaching provided, or social interaction at the Faculty of Science of the University of Turku.

Before submitting an application, the applicant must consult with the head of the department or a professor or associate professor in the field. The head of the department or a professor or associate / assistant professor in the field shall provide the faculty with a statement on how the docentship in question relates to the faculty's activities and the added value that the applicant's docentship would bring to the faculty's activities, research, and teaching. The department will comment on the title of the docentship being applied for and the necessity of the docentship. The title must be

provided in both Finnish and English. The faculty determines the field of docentship on the basis of the applicant's proposal.

Attachments of the application**1. Curriculum vitae**

A curriculum vitae (CV) is a brief summary of the applicant's education, work experience, academic achievements, and other merits. It should be prepared in accordance with good scientific practice and, where possible, using [the CV template](#) (see TENK guidelines www.tenk.fi). It is recommended that the CV template be used in conjunction with [the Good Practices for Researcher Evaluation prepared by the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies](#). Attached to the application documents, the CV is, in principle, a public document, and the information presented in it must be verifiable. The CV is supplemented by a list of publications and a [teaching portfolio](#).

2. List of publications

Publications shall be cited with a complete bibliographic reference, including the authors, the title of the article or publication, and the publisher. The list of publications is a public document. It should not contain any confidential information. The list must not include manuscripts that have yet to be accepted for publication.

1) In the list of publications, applicants must group their publications as follows:

- articles in scientific journals with a peer review process
- articles in scientific compilations and conference publications with a peer review process
- scientific books (published monographs)
- other scientific publications
- textbooks and other books related to research work
- other publications

The last group may include other publications related to research work, presentations, guest lectures, radio and TV programmes, patents, invention disclosures, audiovisual materials, information and communication technology programmes or software, etc. The list of publications must indicate which publications are used as learning materials. Similarly, dissertations and other theses must be marked so that they stand out from the list.

3. Max. 10 publications

Those publications and other works (numbered and no more than 10 altogether) which the applicant wishes to use to demonstrate his qualifications and merits for the docentship and

a) a separate list of these selected publications and

- b) a clarification of the candidate's role and contribution in co-authored publications shortlisted.

4. *Teaching portfolio*

Instructions for compiling the teaching portfolio used at the University of Turku can be found on the university's website.:

[Teaching portfolio | University of Turku](#) and [The structure of the teaching portfolio](#)

Experts

In order to assess the applicant's scientific qualifications, the faculty requests an evaluation from at least two experts.

The dean decides on the selection of experts. The faculty requests a justified proposal from the head of the department regarding experts who will assess the applicant's scientific qualifications. The head of the department may delegate the request for experts to a professor or associate professor in the field if necessary.

Experts are selected from outside the university. They are primarily professors or individuals at the professor level.

The selection of experts will be communicated to the applicant, and he will be given the opportunity to present his views on the biases of the experts or other considerations relevant to the selection of experts. The regulations regarding the biases of experts are as provided in sections 27–28 of the Administrative Code (434/2003).

Experts must submit their statements within two months of being appointed to the task. The statement must clearly indicate whether the applicant meets the scientific qualification requirements for a docent according to the expert's judgment. The expert statement will become public once all experts have submitted their opinions to the faculty.

Proposal to the Rector

Once the applicant's eligibility and merits have been verified, the council of the faculty assesses the applicant's eligibility for the title of docent and submits a proposal to the rector for the award of the title of docent. The proposal must be justified in such a way that it clearly states the grounds for granting the title of docent in terms of scientific competence and good teaching skills. If the council of the faculty has proposed to the rector that the title of docent be granted, the applicant must fill out a personal data form for applicants for the title of docent. The personal data form is needed to register the docentship in the university's information system.

Rector's decision

The title of docent is awarded by the rector at the University of Turku. The rector's decision (certificates in Finnish and English) is sent to the applicant in writing.



This document has been approved by the council of the faculty 28 August 2025.

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