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Appointment of excellent teaching practitioners

Policy document Örebro University

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Contents

Appointment of excellent teaching practitioners	1
General	3
Eligibility requirements	3
Assessment criteria for excellent scholarship of teaching and learning.....	3
1. Teaching expertise and skills	4
2. Ability for pedagogical reflection.....	4
3. Educational leadership	4
4. Scholarly approach	5
Application	5
External expert assessment.....	6
Decision	6
Adoption of the guidelines.....	6

Appointment of excellent teaching practitioners

General

The vice-chancellor has delegated the appointment of excellent teaching practitioners to the faculty boards¹. The purpose of appointing excellent teaching practitioners is to recognise and reward the distinct pedagogical competence and skills that are essential for forming a favourable setting for high-quality education at Örebro University. A person appointed excellent teaching practitioner is expected to contribute to the development of higher education pedagogy at our university.

A person appointed excellent teaching practitioner or equivalent at another higher education institution does not need to apply for appointment as an excellent teaching practitioner at Örebro University, as their appointment is fully valid also at our university.

Eligibility requirements

A person is eligible for appointment as an excellent teaching practitioner if they are employed as a teacher at Örebro University² and have completed qualifying courses in higher education pedagogy of at least 10 weeks³.

Assessment criteria for excellent scholarship of teaching and learning

For a teacher to be appointed excellent teaching practitioner at Örebro University, four assessment criteria must be met. Following each criterion below are a number of examples of ways in which the teacher can demonstrate that the criterion has been met. Note that the examples are **not** to be interpreted as sub-criteria. The teacher can demonstrate that the criterion has been met also in other ways.

¹ *Delegations of the vice-chancellor and deputy vice-chancellor*, ORU 2023/05967

² *Utnämningar av oavlönad docent och excellent lärare* (Appointment of unsalaried docents and excellent teaching practitioners) (ORU 2018/06688) The categories of teaching staff that exist at Örebro University are outlined in the university's appointment procedures.

³ Qualifications and experience obtained in any other way may be recognised as equivalent to these qualifying courses, see further in the guidelines on the assessment of qualifying courses in higher education pedagogy and doctoral supervision (*Riktlinjer för behörighetsgivande högskolepedagogisk utbildning, handledarutbildning och motsvarandebedömning*), ORU 2019/06329.

1. Teaching expertise and skills

The teacher works particularly well in relation to students and has a particularly good ability to support student learning, adapt their instruction to the differing conditions of students and student groups, and put into practice their approach to teaching and learning.

*The teacher can demonstrate that this criterion has been met in different ways, **for example** by them*

- *supporting student learning through constructive and continuous feedback,*
- *using a wide repertoire of student-active modes of instruction and examination that develop students' knowledge, skills and abilities,*
- *creating, adapting and further developing, in a systematic and well-thought-out way, modes of instruction and examination based on the specific conditions that apply within their subject, and*
- *creating teaching or learning materials to stimulate and support student learning.*

2. Ability for pedagogical reflection

The teacher develops their approach to learning and teaching over time by systematically reflecting on and analysing students' learning and study results, and by developing their own practice accordingly.

*The teacher can demonstrate that this criterion has been met in different ways, **for example** by them*

- *problematizing and developing course content, modes of instruction and examination in dialogue with colleagues and students,*
- *identifying pedagogical and didactical challenges in their teaching and using this insight to deepen their understanding of student learning, and*
- *drawing up concrete plans for continued educational development, while taking into account the goals and frameworks under which higher education operates.*

3. Educational leadership

The teacher has a leading role in furthering the educational development of both teaching staff and education at the university.

*The teacher can demonstrate that this criterion has been met in different ways, **for example** by them*

- *having assignments within educational development and leadership, thereby actively contributing to the teaching staff's strengthened ability to foster student*

- learning,*
- *initiating, leading and evaluating educational development projects,*
 - *facilitating collegial collaboration on matters relating to teaching and providing active support to colleagues in their role as teachers, course coordinators, programme coordinators, and similar, and*
 - *initiating discussions, seminars and conferences on teaching and learning within and outside the university.*

4. Scholarly approach

The teacher reflects on student learning based on theories on higher education pedagogy or subject-didactic theory and understanding and shares this insight with their colleagues.

*The teacher can demonstrate that this criterion has been met in different ways, **for example** by them*

- *systematically examining their teaching practice from a scholarly approach to learning and teaching,*
- *explaining grounds for their teaching practice and how it relates to relevant higher education pedagogy or subject-didactic research, and*
- *documenting their teaching practice and disseminating knowledge thereof at seminars, presentations or in publications within or outside the university.*

Application

Applications for appointment as an excellent teaching practitioner are processed continuously throughout the year. The application is made using a designated form and must be accompanied by the following documents:

- Certificate of completed qualifying courses in higher education pedagogy alternatively recognition of corresponding qualifications and experience. A person who has completed the qualifying courses in higher education pedagogy at Örebro University does not need to attach a course certificate.
- Teaching portfolio complying with the template used at Örebro University. In the teaching portfolio, the applicant is to consider all four assessment criteria and explicitly relate to the university's educational philosophy.
- Recommendation of the application by head of division and head of school.
- Work samples and recommendations aiming to demonstrate how the applicant turns their approach to teaching and learning into teaching practice. For example, this may include study guides, videos, course evaluation reports, documents that describe the planning of learning

components or examination design, and statements from previous or current line manager. When it comes to work samples, the applicant is to clarify how these relate to the points included in the teaching portfolio and in what way they demonstrate excellent scholarship of teaching and learning in accordance with the assessment criteria.

- Any publications relevant to the application.

External expert assessment

For the assessment of the application, the opinion of at least one external expert is to be sought. The person nominated as external expert must be particularly suited to assess excellent scholarship of teaching and learning, for example, by being themselves appointed excellent teaching practitioner or by being active within research on higher education pedagogy, and have a good understanding of subject didactics. The external expert is to give reasons for their assessment in a written statement as to whether the teacher meets the assessment criteria for excellent scholarship of teaching and learning and provide a recommendation whether or not the teacher should be appointed excellent teaching practitioner.

Decision

The decision to approve or reject an application for appointment as excellent teaching practitioner is made by the faculty board in question.

Adoption of the guidelines

The guidelines are adopted jointly by the faculty boards. Minor amendments of a non-essential nature may be decided on jointly by the three faculty chairs.