

## Guidelines for the assessment of applicants for professorships and professorial promotion

### Basis for the work of the committee

In addition to the USN's guidelines, the following documents provide the basis for the work of the committee:

- *Regulation concerning appointment and promotion to teaching and research posts* laid down by the Ministry of Education and Research, 9. February 2006
- *Regulation concerning amendments to the regulation concerning appointment and promotion to teaching and research posts* of 23. July 2010
- The advertisement for the post and any detailed description

The USN's guidelines should be regarded as clarification of the general guidelines in the Ministry of Education and Research's Regulation.

The committee's chairperson is responsible for ensuring that the committee's statement is formulated in compliance with these guidelines. The committee's assessment in the case of appointments must normally be made available within three months of the appointment.

### 1. Assessment committee

Applicants for posts or academic promotion must be assessed by an assessment committee.

The expert committee for applicants for vacant professor posts or academic promotion to professor must consist of three persons with professorial competence or equivalent competence in the applicant's subject area. A chairperson for the assessment committee must be appointed from among the committee's members. To the extent possible, and in the subject areas where it is natural, the committee shall include a member from another country. Only one member of the assessment committee can be from the applicant's own institution and they cannot serve as the committee's chairperson. If possible, both genders should be represented on the committee. If this is not possible, the reasons for this must be specified.

In addition to the ordinary experts – and at their suggestion – one or more special experts may be appointed in special cases to express an opinion on parts of the material the applicant has submitted. Any special experts must submit individual assessments as guidance for the ordinary experts.

The committee must always state in which subject area, and possibly in which speciality, the applicant is regarded as possessing professorial competence. The statement must be based on the requirements as they are described below for academic competence. The statement must always express whether or not the declaration of competence is unanimous and indisputable. The assessment must be dated and signed by all committee members.

An expert assessment must normally be made available within three months of the appointment of the committee.

### 2. Assessment criteria

**Academic competence.** The Ministry of Education and Research's guidelines stipulate the same minimum standard for awarding professorial competence that applies when applying for a post (section 1-2). A professorial appointment or promotion based on academic competence must be

<b>Version:</b> 1.0 <b>Last amended:</b> 24.11.2017	<b>Valid from:</b> 01.10.2017	<b>Approved by:</b> Rector Petter Aasen	Page 1 of 6
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grounded on an assessment of documented academic results. Besides the requirement concerning the number of scientific publications, the differences between the competence requirements for a professor and an associate professor include greater requirements concerning quality, depth and breadth, in line with what is considered normal by national and international standards. In accordance with clause (10) of section 2-1 of the Regulation, the assessment committee must *"use the criteria for appointment as a professor in section 1-2 as a basis for the assessment"*. In other words, the requirement for becoming a professor is that the scientific standard must be on a par with established international or national standards within the subject area.

**Practical teaching competence.** Relevant practical teaching competence based on relevant training and teaching/supervision experience is also required for appointments/promotions.

### 3. Academic competence

Assessments for appointment to/promotion in academic posts must be grounded on an assessment of documented academic competence. Applicants are responsible for documenting all aspects of their competence in the application. A professorship requires considerable academic production beyond that which is required for a doctoral degree. Their research must be of a high quality and demonstrate both breadth and specialisation. Their production must reflect an independent research profile and demonstrate an ability to address new problems. Continuous research activity is a prerequisite. For professorial competence to be awarded, a body of academic work must generally be demonstrated that in quality, depth and volume can equal two – three doctoral theses/PhDs in different fields relevant to the advertised post or, when applying for promotion, to the applicant's subject area. The following specific requirements should be met:

#### 3.1 Scope

What is regarded as considerable academic production must be assessed in relation to academic traditions and specifically on the basis of the content of the works and the effort they required. As a guiding norm, the amount of scientific production should equal two – three doctoral theses/PhDs, depending on the scientific tradition. The scientific production can consist of publications (normally subjected to peer review). The applicant must have made considerable contributions to all of the work and had the main responsibility for the research work and presentation in the majority (two thirds) of the works. In the case of more extensive joint authorship, a higher number of works may be required. If some of the articles have been published in one of the subject area's most prestigious journals and the articles are of extremely high quality, the number of articles may be reduced.

#### 3.2 Quality

Publications in national and international scientific journals and books, or other publications, that require peer review are the most important basis for assessing academic merit. International publications are normally a requirement. Works of popular science and other methods of dissemination, e.g. textbooks and other subject literature, will be a plus in an overall assessment, but cannot compensate for a lack of academic works.

The results must be well supported and clearly expressed, as is required for publication in recognised scientific journals or by recognised publishers of scientific books. Weight will be given to whether or not the works have been, or could be, of significance for the development of the subject or practices in the area. Weight will also be given to originality with respect to the problem, methods or data sources. The requirements for originality and significance are clearly higher than for a doctoral degree, but it sufficient for some of the works to satisfy such higher requirements.

#### 3.3 Breadth

The requirement for breadth is intended to ensure that applicants are qualified to teach and supervise at a high level in more than one specialisation. Pursuant to the Ministry of Education

<b>Version:</b> 1.0 <b>Last amended:</b> 24.11.2017	<b>Valid from:</b> 01.10.2017	<b>Approved by:</b> Rector Petter Aasen	Page 2 of 6
---	----------------------------------	--	-------------

and Research's Regulation, up to fifteen scientific works may be submitted for assessment. The Regulation also states that all applicants must also submit a complete list of all publications or other documentable production that are being cited as grounds for assessment (see point 5 below). Academic breadth can thereby also be documented by that part of the applicant's production that lies outside the works that have been submitted for assessment. The production should encompass different types of problems, themes, research methods and publication channels. Applicants should have demonstrated an ability to place their own works into a greater context.

### 3.4 Independence and cooperation

Applicants must have documented that they will be capable of conducting all important elements of scientific research, independently and with a high level of quality. This can be documented by works in which the applicant is the sole author (or first author in disciplines where this indicates primary responsibility for the work), by declarations from secondary authors and through project management experience. Furthermore, documentation of experience from research cooperation, project management and supervision is a prerequisite for professorial competence.

### 3.5 Visibility

The works should be published (or be accepted for publication) in channels with satisfactory quality control and where they can reach other researchers who will build on or critique the results. This normally means publication in international channels, but when the topic so indicates, publication in national channels is acceptable. Weight will be given to what is regarded as good publication practice in the subject.

### 3.6 Relevance

The works should relate to what is happening on the research front at the time of publication. The academic production from the last five years – both quality and scope – will be afforded particular weight. In assessments of scope and breadth, weight may be given to the entire publication list, including works that have not been submitted.

The academic competence must be clear and indisputable in order to qualify for appointment or promotion to professor. In the case of promotion, the competence must be within the post's subject area. It is the responsibility of applicants to submit documentation that provides a basis for a qualitative assessment of the applicant's academic competence.

## 4 Artistic production and competence

In order to be appointed to a professorial post or achieve professorial competence on the basis of artistic qualifications, applicants must document extensive artistic activities at the highest level conforming to international standards and relevant breadth and specialisation at the highest level of the subject or disciplines.

For certain positions, a combination of academic and artistic competence will be relevant. According to the Regulation, applicants must in these circumstances choose whether the application for promotion will be made on an academic or artistic basis. The Regulation requires associate professors to be appointed on the basis of either academic or artistic competence, cf section 1-4 of the Regulation. If applicants were appointed in the subject area on the basis of academic competence (doctoral degree or equivalent), they will have to apply for promotion on the basis of academic competence. If applicants were appointed on the basis of artistic competence, they will have to apply for promotion on the basis of artistic competence.

In an assessment of overall artistic production (with particular emphasis on the selected works) priority will be given to applicants' artistic production in the last five to ten years. Particular weight will be given to whether applicants' professional production in recent years has increased, stagnated or declined.

## 5 Documentation requirements

<b>Version:</b> 1.0 <b>Last amended:</b> 24.11.2017	<b>Valid from:</b> 01.10.2017	<b>Approved by:</b> Rector Petter Aasen	Page 3 of 6
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Applications must be accompanied by a complete list of applicants' artistic production, which must for the most part be based on works that have been made public, and any written works produced by the applicant. In the application, the applicant must indicate which works (up to fifteen) they consider to be the most important. Documentation of these works must be submitted for assessment. The committee must conduct a particularly thorough assessment of these selected works. The committee may ask for more works to be submitted. The documentation must state whether the works have been made public in professionally recognised contexts, and the committee must take this into account in its assessment. The applicant can also submit write-ups and/or reviews of the submitted works that have been published in relevant publications. Documentation of other professional or subject-related technical competence, linked to the submitted works or included as a separate item in the list of fifteen works, may also be enclosed. If works that have not been made public are submitted for assessment, the reasons for this must be specified in the application. In its assessment of the individual applicant, the committee must discuss such works separately and justify the weight it has given to them.

When submitting works for assessment where the applicant is one of several contributors, the application must contain an account of the applicant's contribution to the work.

## 6. Teaching and other competence

For professorial competence, section 1-2, no. 3, of the Regulation requires *"Documented competence in relevant educational theory and practice based on training or on teaching and supervision."* This means that applicants must document basic teaching competence. In addition to this, experience from teaching and supervision at all levels, normally including doctoral degree level, is required.

Other competence cannot compensate for deficiencies in academic competence.

## 7. Popular science production

Documented works of popular science and other methods of dissemination will be a plus in an overall assessment. It is the responsibility of applicants to document their competence such that it provides a basis for a qualitative assessment.

Popular science production can be documented by means of lectures given, media coverage or published works.

There must be no doubt that the applicant can teach the subject at all levels. The applicant's ability to teach at all levels must be clearly stated in the committee's assessment.

## 8. Academic administrative qualifications

Academic administrative qualifications may be a plus in assessments of applications for promotion or appointment to a professorship. Applicants must document any academic administrative experience such as project management, academic related administrative offices held, etc. Weight will be given to experience from heading research projects, coordinating research activities, and experience from strategic research work.

## 9. Overall assessment

The committee must define the overall competence of qualified applicants in relation to each other as clearly as possible as a basis for further consideration by bodies with the power to recommend and appoint.

In overall assessments, primary weight must be given to academic/artistic competence as an absolute requirement. The fact that an applicant might have particularly high competence within teaching or popular science does not reduce the requirement for academic/artistic competence.

If the documentation includes student works (dissertations, master's theses and similar), little weight should be given to these in the overall assessment.

<b>Version:</b> 1.0 <b>Last amended:</b> 24.11.2017	<b>Valid from:</b> 01.10.2017	<b>Approved by:</b> Rector Petter Aasen	Page 4 of 6
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## 10. Ranking of applicants for professorships

The committee must provide an advisory assessment and rank the three best-qualified applicants when there are a number of competent applicants. To assist the appointments body in deciding to what extent interviews, trial lectures and rules on moderate gender allocation should influence their recommendation, the assessment must always clarify whether the academic divergence between the ranked applicants is large or small. Applicants with approximately equal competence must be given the same ranking.

In the ranking of applicants who are approximately equal with regard to academic/artistic competence, practical teacher training and experience will be decisive. If the advertisement/post description contains no special requirements, an applicant with high practical teaching competence should be ranked above an applicant with marginal experience, all else being equal. Teaching experience outside the advertised subject field must be included in the assessment.

## 11. Formulation of the statement

The committee shall normally, and always in the case of applications for professorial posts and professorial promotion, deliver an overall statement. The statement shall:

- Explain the formal basis for the assessment, i.e. the Regulations, recommendations, guidelines, description of the post, etc., on which the committee's work is based.
- Describe the applicants' formal competence, including education and work experience.
- Explain the committee's assessment of the documentation the applicant has submitted.
- Describe any audition/other artistic activity which has been carried out, and explain the committee's assessment of the applicant's artistic performance in this case.
- Explain the committee's assessment of the applicants' overall competence on the basis of documentation and any artistic examinations.
- Clarify whether the statement is unanimous (in the case of applications for professorial promotion).

By way of introduction, the committee should highlight and, if necessary, substantiate any aspects of the description of the post to which it has found it particularly necessary to give weight.

Academic competence, artistic competence, popular science production and practical teaching competence must be addressed in separate sections with a conclusion regarding the competence of each applicant.

In the evaluation of applicants for professorships, a brief and as balanced description as possible of each applicant must be provided as advice when it comes to their education, academic/artistic work and practical experience. The documentation submitted must be discussed and assessed, either on an individual or a collective basis. The committee should specify which requirements applicants it does not consider qualified do not fulfil and the extent to which the person concerned may be qualified for temporary appointment pursuant to conditions concerning qualifications, if the text of the advertisement allows this.

In the case of applications for promotion, detailed reasons must be given when a committee finds that an applicant does not possess professorial competence. In the event of dissent, both the majority and the minority must explain their positions in detail. When an applicant is assessed as having professorial competence it must be clearly stated that this assessment is unanimous and indisputable.

If the committee has taken into consideration submitted works that have not been peer-reviewed or published, the committee must establish that they are of the same academic quality as the peer-reviewed, published works.

The committee's chairperson is responsible for ensuring that the committee's statement is formulated in compliance with these guidelines.

<b>Version:</b> 1.0 <b>Last amended:</b> 24.11.2017	<b>Valid from:</b> 01.10.2017	<b>Approved by:</b> Rector Petter Aasen	Page 5 of 6
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A template for use in expert assessments for professorial appointments and promotion to professor is enclosed.

<b>Version:</b> 1.0 <b>Last amended:</b> 24.11.2017	<b>Valid from:</b> 01.10.2017	<b>Approved by:</b> Rector Petter Aasen	Page 6 of 6
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