



April 6, 2017

LUNDS UNIVERSITET

Naturvetenskapliga fakulteten

Faculty Office

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Guidelines for application to a readership (title of Docent) at Lund University's Faculty of Science

Introduction

The University has the right to appoint readers if this can be considered to benefit research and education at the University. However, a university does not have any obligation to appoint readers. The issue of unremunerated readerships was previously regulated in central provisions together with additional local regulations. Individuals will be assessed for a readership only if such an appointment satisfies the University's need for qualified expertise. Currently, at Lund University, each faculty determines whether it is to have the title of reader or not. Since the title of reader is deemed to fill an important function both as a measure of academic qualifications and in practical terms for example when filling vacancies, the faculty has decided to keep the title of reader. The faculty's readers are to take part in third cycle examinations.

Readership appointments committee

There is a readership committee, which deals with readership matters. The committee appoints an external expert for the assessment of applications.

Requirements for appointment to a readership

The Faculty of Science sets the following criteria for appointment to a readership:

- Applicants can be appointed to a readership at the faculty if they have strong and broad research expertise which is of obvious use to research and education, above all to research studies, within the faculty subject concerned. The applicant is to have earned a PhD degree or have equivalent qualifications.
- Research expertise is mainly the documented ability for independent and innovative research work beyond the doctoral degree, but also teaching skills and interest in the dissemination of research findings to non-experts. Independence is an important component in the process of developing as a successful researcher. It is therefore an important part of the faculty's requirements for appointment as a reader. The readership appointments committee considers the applicant having at least a couple of publications without the co-authorship of previous supervisors from the PhD studies. Preferably, the applicant should also have at least one publication without the co-authorship of previous senior mentors (e.g. from post doc) as a sign of independence. Young researchers often continue to collaborate and publish together with

more senior colleagues and supervisors long after the public defence of their thesis, however. Such co-publication need not be a disadvantage, but in such a case it is important that the applicant is able to demonstrate in some other way that he/she has conducted independent research, for example by clearly specifying the roles of the co-authors in the project. If the applicant has no publications without previous mentors, it must be clearly shown in the application that the applicant has been the principal investigator (“PI”) of at least one published study. As PI the board considers someone who runs own research based on own ideas, and preferably also with own funding. In doubtful cases, the committee may ask for statements from co-authors other than the former principal supervisor to support their assessment of the applicant’s independence.

- Research production, in addition to the works included in the completed PhD degree, are to quantitatively and qualitatively constitute an important addition to the doctoral degree and should correspond to at least an additional doctoral thesis. The research production beyond the doctoral thesis should primarily have been published in reputable international peer-reviewed journals or equivalent publications.
- Teaching expertise and qualifications are primarily to concern active participation in first, second and third cycle study programmes, and in addition to direct teaching activities can regard course development, supervision and popular science information. Documented experience of supervision of degree projects and research students is of particular importance.
- Applicants are to have completed the faculty’s readership course or acquired equivalent knowledge in some other way, (applicants who have not yet completed the readership course can still submit their application and attend the readership course while their application is being processed).

Readers are only appointed in the third cycle subjects and specialisations that are offered at the faculty.

Usually, eligibility for readership is only considered for applicants who are actively working as researchers/lecturers at Lund University. If there are exceptional circumstances for considering applicants who are not employed at Lund University, the department most closely concerned within the faculty is to provide a statement justifying to what extent a readership appointment would benefit research and education within the department.

To be considered as a reader at the Faculty of Science, a person who is at the time of appointment already a reader at another higher education institution is to undergo review by the readership appointments committee. On the basis of an application, structured according to the same guidelines as for all other applicants, the readership appointments committee decides whether all or some of the faculty’s criteria for readership can be deemed to be met through the previously held readership position.

The applicant can thereby be exempted from some or all of the steps in the normal readership review procedure. The conditions for complete exemption from further review are that:

- the requirements for a readership at the current higher education institution essentially correspond to the requirements set at the Faculty of Science
- the applicant has the formal qualifications required for eligibility to supervise doctoral students at LU in compliance with the Vice-Chancellor’s decision LS 2011/701
- the subject director (equiv.) and the head of the applicant’s department recommend the appointment.

Expert

In the assessment of the applicant's research expertise, a statement must be obtained from at least one expert from another higher education institution. In a written statement, the expert is to state whether the applicant meets the requirements for research expertise according to the description above. The statement is to provide an overview of the applicant's research and its development. The assessment is to be made with reference to theoretical and methodological knowledge, ability for innovative and independent research work and presentation skills. The most important findings are to be mentioned and their significance in relation to international developments within the subject area should be assessed. If the applicant has many co-publications, his or her contribution to these should be made clear. The statement is to result in the expert taking a clear position with regard to the applicant's research expertise.

Readership lecture

The applicant is to give a public readership lecture. The lecturer's teaching ability in a popular science context is thereby assessed. The lecture is to cover the applicant's own subject area, but not his or her own research specialisation. It is to be of a popular science nature and be intended for the target audience of research students within the entire faculty, i.e. even beyond the boundaries of the applicant's own subject. The lecture is to be 30–40 minutes long and held in either Swedish or English. It is concluded with a discussion and any questions from the audience.

The readership lecture is organised at the applicant's department. The subject is decided by the readership appointments committee, which chooses from among the suggestions provided by the subject director. The time, venue and chair of the lecture are decided by the applicant and the subject director in consultation with the two auditors appointed by the readership appointments committee. The committee's auditors are to give an assessment of the lecture. The assessment is to address the applicant's demonstrated teaching skills with special attention to the structure and delivery of the lecture. Examples of what can be assessed: Do we find out early on in the lecture why this research is being conducted? Does the lecturer use any technical teaching aids to support what is being said? Does the lecturer activate the audience's thinking and learning with his or her presentation technique? Has the lecturer related the subject to adjacent research and the audience's prior knowledge?

The time and venue for the lecture are to be communicated at least three weeks before the event. The faculty office ensures that the lecture is announced in the faculty newsletter and in the University's general calendar of events, as well as via email to heads of department and deans. The department is responsible for any additional advertising. The faculty is keen for readership lectures to be highlighted, partly because they are significant elements in the process of qualification for individual employees, and partly because they are excellent opportunities for researchers and doctoral students to gain an insight into another research field.

Applications

Applications are submitted to the readership appointments committee for the Faculty of Science. The application and all qualifying documents are to be sent as a pdf file to the readership appointments committee secretary Jesper Zimmerman (Jesper.Zimmerman@science.lu.se).

The application is to include the following:

The application is to consist of a brief summary, at most five pages, of the applicant's research and teaching activities and training. The summary is to be structured in such a way as to be assessable on the basis of the requirements that are presented above under the heading "Requirements for appointment to a readership". The application can be written in Swedish or

English, but must be written in English if any of the experts proposed by the subject director is not Swedish-speaking.

The application is to contain the following attachments:

- 1 CV, certified by one person.
- 2 Teaching qualifications which are to be presented according to the checklist, see attachment at the end of this document.
- 3 A list of the published works that the applicant wishes to be considered, as well as information on the applicant's contributions to the publications. It is to be clear from the list which works were included in the applicant's doctoral thesis. The list should, if possible, contain links to the web pages where the works are to be found. The publications themselves need not be included, but instead are to be sent directly to the expert once he or she has been appointed. The readership appointments committee notifies the applicant when this can be done.
- 4 Any relevant certificates from readership and/or supervision courses.
- 5 A statement from the subject director (equiv.), also *signed by the head of department*; the statement should make it clear to what extent the appointment of the applicant to a readership could be seen as beneficial to research and education in the subject. The subject director is also to submit several (at least three) suggestions of possible experts to assess the applicant's qualifications for readership. The suggested experts are to be ranked. The experts do not need to have been consulted at this stage.
- 6 A statement from the subject director (equiv.) on the applicant's teaching experience/expertise. In the statement, the subject director (equiv.) is to propose at least three possible titles for the readership lecture. As stated above, the lecture is to deal with the applicant's own subject areas but not his or her own research specialization. The proposed titles should not be too restrictive and should be clearly distinct.
- 7 The citation frequency of the publications (with information on which database was used).
- 8 Future research plans, brief description of one page at most.

Decision

On the basis of the submitted application documents, the expert statement, the subject director (equiv.)'s statement and the assessment of the readership lecture, the readership appointments committee submits a justified proposal for a decision on the appointment to a readership. The dean decides on the case. If the decision is positive, the reader receives a certificate of his or her appointment.

Decisions concerning appointments to a readership cannot be appealed.

Appendix

Checklist for assessment of teaching qualifications

The points below for reporting teaching experience and knowledge apply to both undergraduate and post-graduate programmes.

1 Teaching experience

- scope and levels of teaching
- different forms and methods of teaching such as seminars, lectures, supervision of laboratory work, PBL, degree project supervision
- different forms of examination
- international experience such as collaboration in international cooperation projects, teaching in different languages, teaching abroad

2 Training and continuing professional development in teaching and learning

- training in teaching and learning in higher education
- other teacher training
- other relevant training

3 Development of teaching aids

- production of books, compendia, laboratory work manuals, films, video programmes and suchlike.
- production of IT-based material

4 Educational management and development work

- planning, management and development of new courses or course components
- evaluation work and similar
- education conferences, seminars, publications, etc.
- funding awarded for development work
- management assignments such as director of studies
- study guidance
- other activities, such as internal and external assignments

5 Awards, prizes and suchlike

- State awarding body and justification

6 Research studies

Here the applicant is to account for experience within research studies which does not naturally fall under any of points 1-5 above. For example, experience as a principal supervisor or assistant supervisor (number of students supervised and degrees to be stated, along with ongoing and concluded supervision).