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University of Southern Denmark – Faculty of Business and Social Sciences

GUIDANCE FOR THE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

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I. Introduction

1. Basis for the Assessment Committee's work

- Ministerial Order No. 242 of 13 March 2012, on the appointment of academic staff at universities, including the previous version of 25 April 2008, numbered 284.
- Job structure 2007 (revised with effect from 1 September 2013) for academic staff at universities, cf. note dated 28 June 2013 from the Agency for Universities and Internationalisation.
- The job position in question.
- Academic qualification guidelines.

2. Submission of the Assessment Committee's evaluation and material

The submission of assessments for academic positions takes place in a special electronic assessment portal.

The individual members of the Assessment Committee must submit an assessment of each applicant based on the department's qualification guidelines. The assessment must indicate whether the person is "qualified" or "not qualified", and this assessment will subsequently determine whether the final assessment of the applicant is due to unanimity or a majority recommendation for decision.

The application and attachments are uploaded by the applicant in connection with the application via the SDU website. If the applicant has not been able to upload the documents, e.g. because the documents are not in a digital version or because the quality of the document makes it impossible to digitise, the applicant may, in accordance with prior agreement with the personnel department, submit the material in another way (before the application deadline).

The personnel department supplies the documents to the members of the Assessment Committee.

3. Incapacity

The members of the Assessment Committee themselves must decide on the question of possible incapacity. It is the chairman's responsibility to ensure that the members of the committee are informed of this and that each member decides whether he/she is incapable in relation to one or more applicants.

The provisions on incapacity are set out in Chapter 2, §§ 3-6 of the Public Administration Act. Relationships that could typically lead to incapacity are as follows:

- Personal or financial interest in the outcome of the case
- Family and/or cohabitation

- Affiliation with private companies, associations, etc., which have a particular interest in the outcome of the case
- Other relationships that may raise doubts about their impartiality, e.g. in connection with:
 - a. Co-authorship
 - b. Other close professional co-operation or
 - c. Friendship/enmity.

It should be noted:

- a. Co-authorship between the applicant and a member of the Assessment Committee does not result in automatic incapacity. What is crucial to the assessment is:
 - The scope of the co-authorship
 - Timing
 - The weight of the work in question is added to the assessment.

The co-author statement provided is used to assess the importance of the co-authorship in relation to the matter of incapacity.

- b. Other professional co-operation: The fact that a member of the Assessment Committee must assess a person with whom he or she has or has had collegial co-operation (e.g. guidance) does not in itself result in incapacity either.
- c. Friendship/enmity: In order for incapacity to occur, there must be a close friendship or apparent enmity. Ordinary collegial sympathy or general academic disagreement do not in themselves result in incapacity. There is also no basis for incapacity if an applicant does not like an assessor or vice versa. However, it is a condition that, in this case, the assessor can relate professionally and impartially to the applicant.

Consequently, a specific assessment must be made as to whether it is reasonable to question their impartiality in deciding whether there should be incapacity.

If it appears that a person that has been appointed as a member of the Assessment Committee is incapacity in relation to one or more applicants for the post, they cannot participate in the Assessment Committee's work and must therefore resign from the committee. Notification shall be made to the Dean (faculty's personnel department) as soon as possible, and a new member will subsequently be appointed.

II. The Assessment Committee's function/premises for the committee's work

1. The Assessment Committee

The Assessment Committee's task is, pursuant to § 4, subsection 2 of the Appointment Order, to determine whether the applicants possess the academic qualifications in research, teaching, knowledge exchange, etc., as stipulated in the job structure and, furthermore, fulfil the academic qualifications specified in the job post, as well as whether the applicant meets the qualification guidelines. Thus, in preparing the assessments, they must be based on the qualifications guidelines for the individual departments.

The assessment shall be such that it constitutes both a substantive and adequate basis for the decision of the Employment Committee. The assessment is expected to be sufficient for the Employment Committee so that no further documentation is needed to gain a thorough insight into the applicants qualifications.

The Assessment Committee must not prioritise among the qualified applicants as to who should be hired for the position.

Members of the committee (including the chairman) must not communicate directly with the applicants. Should the committee require further information, such as co-author statements, the chairman must request the faculty's personnel department to obtain the information.

All applicants must be assessed by all of the committee members. It is therefore up to all members to familiarise themselves with the claimed material. The assessment of the individual applicants must be prepared jointly by the members; however, drafts may be prepared by the individual members after an agreed division of labour and on the basis of a preliminary discussion in the committee.

If there is a dispute about the assessment of the individual applicant, this must be clearly stated in the assessment. However, the assessment must, in any case, be expressed in one clear evaluation of the applicants qualifications, including a final assessment of the person in question as either "qualified" or "not qualified".

The assessment must be written in decent and well-balanced language which does not give rise to doubt that the assessors have made an objective assessment, cf. the Ombudsman's statement of 16 April 1973

Only members of the Assessment Committee can participate in the Assessment Committee's work. The members of the Assessment Committee have a duty of confidentiality.

2. Special duties of the chairman

The chairman has the duty of instructing the other committee members and is thus responsible for the work being organised in such a way as to ensure that the deadline for submission of the assessment is

respected. If it is found that the deadline cannot be met, the chairman must contact the faculty's personnel department immediately for a deadline extension.

It is the chairman's responsibility to request that the Dean (faculty's personnel department) prompt requests the applicant to provide a co-author statement if there is one or more co-authors of claimed material and the applicant not already has provided a co-author statement regarding the scope and nature of the applicants share of the work.

It is the chairman of the Assessment Committee's task to compile the individual assessments and to submit the applicant's final assessment as "qualified" or "not qualified" in the assessment form in the assessment portal.

The chairman must also ensure that any doubt regarding the committee's work is resolved as quickly as possible.

III. Assessment form

The assessment must consist of an evaluation of each applicant.

For each applicant, all members of the Assessment Committee must indicate whether they evaluated the applicant as "qualified" or "not qualified" in the assessment portal.

1. Assessment of each applicant

The assessment of each applicant must be made in the assessment portal and, in accordance with the department's qualification guidelines, must include

- a. Introduction of the applicant
- b. Assessment of academic qualifications
- c. Assessment of teaching qualifications
- d. Assessment of other qualification requirements (stated in the specific job description)
- e. How the applicant meets the department's qualification guidelines
- f. Final assessment of the applicant

It should be noted:

- a. The introduction on the applicant must contain:
 - Relevant appointments *after* obtaining their Master's degree, stating the nature, place and period.
 - Employment, etc. *before* obtaining the degree, if this is relevant in relation to the position sought.
 - Other types of relevant further education, study period(s) and similar academic

activity

b. Assessment of academic qualifications

- The work involved is identified, characterised and assessed:

1. Identified: The assessment must contain a complete list of the submitted works, specifying the title, journal name, print location and release year. If the work is not published, state the form in which it is available. If there is one or more co-authors, co-author statements must be included in a way that gives the assessment committee a clear impression on how much the applicant has contributed to the work. The work is included in the assessment with the weight of the applicants share and the nature of the work. This weighting - preferably in prose form - must be stated in the assessment.
2. Characterised: For example, PhD dissertation, doctoral dissertation, popular production, paper, review, etc.
3. Assessed: It is the committee's exclusive duty to assess the works. It should be emphasised which relevant qualifications the applicant has demonstrated on the basis of the work for the exact position applied for, so that a value/quality assessment is done and not just a description of the works. The assessment may, taking into account the job category, job description and qualification guidelines, include the degree of originality in academic production, international orientation, academic breadth and depth, productivity (assessed on the basis of the attached publications list), etc. However, academic relevance in relation to the job description must always be included.

- The claimed material: The assessment of the academic qualifications must be based on the material claimed by the applicant. The Assessment Committee cannot include *unclaimed* material in its assessment, but the committee can, via the faculty's personnel department, recommend to the Dean that all applicants should have the opportunity to include additional academic material in the assessment. In such case, a deadline for this shall be stated, which all applicants will be informed of. If the committee finds that, on the basis of the material claimed, it is unable to make a sufficiently satisfactory assessment of one or more applicants, the committee can ask the Dean (via the faculty's personnel department) to obtain additional material from this applicant.
- If the application material states that the applicant has been on parental leave in his/her academic career, this fact cannot be reflected negatively in the assessment of the applicant's academic qualifications.

c. Assessment of teaching qualifications:

- The assessment of teaching qualifications is based on the teaching documentation that the applicant has submitted.

At the Faculty of Business and Social Sciences, emphasis is placed on the fact that, in particular, applicants for associate professorships and professorships have good, well-documented teaching qualifications and have participated in or have plans for

developing teaching in the subject area. The evaluation assesses the quality of the teaching (theoretical and practical) based on the submitted teaching portfolio, evaluation forms and similar documentation, and the qualifications are related to the position applied for. The committee should indicate the importance of the individual elements for the overall assessment of the applicants teaching qualifications.

- d. Assessment of other qualification requirements: Qualification requirements specified in the specific job description and/or the department's qualification guidelines must be taken into account by the Assessment Committee.
 - Other qualifications can be, e.g., research management, the ability to attract external funds, international research collaborations, guidance for research students, board members, international posts, editorial posts and administrative qualifications as well as management experience.
- e. Final assessment
 - The final assessment of the applicant, as a whole, must contain a summary of the assessments done pertaining to the applicants qualifications in relation to the current position and the qualification guidelines. In its assessment, the committee must substantiate and justify its opinion as to whether the applicant is qualified or not qualified for the position.

It must be decided whether the applicant meets the requirements:

- in the department's qualification guidelines
- stated in the job description, and
- job structure circular provisions on the qualification requirements for the individual job categories, including the weighting of teaching qualifications in relation to the academic qualifications.

The assessment must not result in an evaluation of the applicants general competences in relation to a particular job category but must relate specifically to competence in relation to the requirements that the specific position entails.

In general, the committee's opinion on whether or not an applicant is qualified must be clear-cut and unconditional. The qualification assessment must not be marked as "well qualified" or "highly qualified"; however, the terms "not yet qualified" and "not on the current basis" can be used.

If there is no agreement among the members of the committee, it must be clearly stated who considers the applicant qualified or not qualified, respectively, and the individual's viewpoints must then be justified separately. In any case, however, the committee is required to prepare a clear assessment of the applicants qualifications (qualified/not qualified).

If the Assessment Committee agrees that an applicant is not qualified for the position, the committee may, however, restrict itself to briefly specifying which qualification requirements have not been met.

IV. Case closure

1. When the assessment is submitted to the Dean

The Assessment Committee submits its assessment to the Dean (faculty's personnel department), who then ensures that the formal requirements are met. If the assessment does not constitute a satisfactory decision basis and/or does not meet the formal requirements, the assessment is returned to the committee for supplementation or revision.

After the assessment work has been completed, the assessment of the individual applicant will be sent in consultation with the person in question. Any remarks made by the applicant on the specific assessment will be sent to the committee for comments. The person in question is informed of these comments and it is possible for the applicant to ask questions.

2. Remuneration for the Assessment Committee's members

Remuneration is paid to external members of the Assessment Committee, i.e. members who are not employed by the same institution as the one who has appointed the Assessment Committee.

Remuneration is given in relation to the job category the assessment concerns and the number of applicants.¹

Upon completion of the assessment, the external members of the Assessment Committee receive an electronic fee form from the personnel department.

The form must be completed and returned to HR Service, Payroll Office via e-mail to: loen@sdu.dk, after which the fees will be paid.

¹ Cf. the agreement between the Ministry of Finance and the Danish Confederation of Professional Associations (Staff Committee) on remuneration to members of assessment committees in institutions of higher education under the Ministry of Education

V. Facts pertaining to the basis of the committee's work

In 2012, the Ministry of Research, Innovation and Higher Education promulgated Ministerial Order No. 242 of 13 March 2012 on the appointment of academic staff at universities (the new 2012 Employment Consolidation Act).

This set of rules revises Ministerial Order No. 284 of 25 April 2008 on the appointment of academic staff at universities, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Development (2008 Employment Consolidation Act) and is valid as a rule with effect for all academic positions at university level that are advertised and filled after 1 April 2012, cf. § 10, subsection 1 of Ministerial Order No. 242.

However, the University of Southern Denmark is primarily working on the basis of Ministerial Order No. 284 of 25 April 2008 on the appointment of academic staff at universities. This is due to the fact that the Executive Board at the University of Southern Denmark has decided, at a meeting on 8 June 2012, to work according to the requirements of the previous Ministerial Order, although with the opportunity of asking the Vice-Chancellor for an exemption from these rules.

In connection with the revision of the Employment Consolidation Act, the Faculty of Business and Social Sciences has adopted the following:

- There is no requirement for the appointment of an externally based assessment committee for positions at postdoctoral/assistant professor level, but there must still be a written academic assessment of the applicants for these positions in accordance with the requirements of the job structure and the 2008 Employment Consolidation Act.
- Current practices for setting up externally based assessment committees for academic staff at associate professor/professor level are continued in accordance with the requirements of the Employment Consolidation Act.