

# Faculty of Science

## Guidelines for the assessment committee

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## **1. Introduction**

The basis for the work of the assessment committee

- Ministerial Order on the Appointment of Academic Staff at Universities no 242 of 13 March 2012 ((Ministry of Science, Innovation and Higher Education)
- Conditions of employment 2007 for academic staff at universities, ref. memo of the University and Building Committee of 13 June 2007.
- The relevant job advertisement.

## **2. Submission of the assessment committee's assessment and material**

The University of Southern Denmark is using an online recruitment system SDUjob – e-recruitment, and the submission of assessments of applicants for academic positions must be made in our assessment portal. The assessment committee members will receive information regarding login via e-mail.

It is the responsibility of the Chairman of the committee to type up the individual assessment and to give the final collective assessment of “qualified” or “not qualified”.

The individual members of the assessment committee must separately for each individual candidate give an assessment of “qualified” or “not qualified”. This assessment will consequently form the basis for whether the overall assessment of the given candidate is unanimous or based on a majority vote.

The final overall assessments are automatically submitted to the faculty when saved in the portal.

The application material of the individual applicants is uploaded digitally by the applicant, when he/she applies for a position through SDU's website. Should it is not possible for the applicant to upload the desired material in digitalized form, either because the material is not produced in a digitalized form or because it is not possible to transfer the material digitally, the applicant may, after previous agreement with the faculty, forward the material in hard copies.

## **3. Disqualification**

Members of the assessment committee must themselves decide on the question of disqualification. It is up to the chairman to ensure that the members of the committee are informed about this issue and that each member judges whether he/she is disqualified in relation to one or more applicants.

Provisions relating to disqualification can be seen in Regulations for Administration, chapter 2. Circumstances that would typically lead to disqualification are as follows:

- Personal or financial interest in the outcome of the case
- Family and/or cohabitant relations
- Association to private concerns, associations etc. that have particular interest in the outcome of the case

- Other relations that could arouse doubt as to the impartiality of the individual concerned, for example in connection with
  - a. Co-authorship. Co-authorship does not necessarily entail disqualification. In cases of significant doubt the committee can request a declaration of co-authorship in order to assess the significance of the co-authorship to the question of disqualification. Central to the decision is:
    - the extent of co-authorship
    - the time of co-authorship
    - the weight given to the relevant work(s) in the assessment
  - b. Other close professional collaboration. Nor does the fact that a member of the assessment committee is to assess an individual with whom he/she has had a collegial collaboration (e.g. as supervisor) in itself necessarily imply disqualification.
  - c. Friendly/unfriendly relations. There must be evidence of close friendly relations or demonstrable unfriendly relations for this to bring about disqualification. Ordinary collegial sympathies or ordinary professional differences do not in themselves lead to disqualification. Nor are there grounds for disqualification if an applicant does not like an assessor or vice versa. This is, however, conditional on the assessor being able to conduct him/herself professionally, with neutrality and impartiality towards the applicant.

In deciding on the degree to which disqualification might come into consideration, a concrete assessment has, therefore, to be carried out as to whether the individual's impartiality can reasonably be questioned.

In the event that an individual selected to be a member of the assessment committee proves to be disqualified in respect of one or more applicants to a post, then that individual cannot take part in the work of the assessment committee and must, therefore, withdraw from the committee. Information to this effect should be sent to the dean as quickly as possible, upon which a new member will be selected.

#### **4. Function of the assessment committee/premises for the committee's work**

According to the provisions for appointments Section 4, Subsection 2, the task of the assessment committee is to decide whether the applicants possess the academic qualifications in research, teaching, presentation etc. that are required in the conditions of employment and whether they meet the remainder of the academic qualifications stated in the advertisement.

The assessment should be expressed in such a way that it presents both a factual and a comprehensive basis for a decision by management.

The assessment committee must not place the qualified applicants in an order of priority in respect of which one should be appointed to the post – not even in an advisory priority. The assessment is solely an academic assessment of whether the applicant is qualified for the position in question or not based on the requirements of the conditions of employment and the individual announcement.

In the assessment the assessment committee must unambiguously conclude that the applicant is “qualified” or “not qualified” for the position, possibly “not yet qualified” or “not qualified based on current documentation”. It is not allowed to prioritize using wording such as “well qualified” or “extremely well qualified” in the assessments. When more than one applicant are qualified, their individual conclusions must, however, be sufficient for the management to distinguish between applicants and their qualifications.

All applicants must be assessed by all members of the committee. It is, therefore, incumbent on all members to ensure that they are familiar with the material referred to. The assessment of individual applicants must be made jointly by committee members. Drafts can, however, be made by individual members after an agreed division of labour and on the basis of provisional discussions by the committee as a whole.

Any disagreement there might be as to the assessment of an individual applicant must be clearly reflected in the assessment.

The assessment must be composed in a sober and well-balanced written form that gives no basis for doubt as to whether the assessors are making an objective assessment, cf. statement by the ombudsman of 16 April 1973.

No one except the members of the committee can take part in the work of the assessment committee.

Members of the assessment committee and all others involved in the case are bound to observe professional confidentiality.

#### **Special duties of the chairman**

The chairman has a duty to instruct the remainder of the committee and is responsible for deadlines for the submission of the committee’s recommendation being met. If it proves impossible to meet the deadline, the chairman must immediately request the dean for an extension.

It is the duty of the chairman to type up the final assessment in the assessment portal under each candidate. The chairman must ensure that any doubts regarding the work of the committee are resolved as quickly as possible.

Neither the chairman nor the other members of the assessment committee may communicate directly with any of the applicants. Should the committee require further information, such as, for example, declarations of co-authorship, the chairman must ask the dean to procure these.

#### **5. Form of the assessment**

The assessment should consist of an assessment of each individual applicant. The individual assessments are sent to the applicants for comments by the faculty secretariat. All members of the assessment committee must give an individual “qualified” or “not qualified” for each applicant in the assessment portal.

The assessment of each individual applicant should be completed in the assessment portal and should include the following:

a. Presentation of the applicant which should include

- Any relevant appointment after acquiring the Master's Degree, stating its nature, place and period of employment.
- Appointments prior to acquiring the Master's Degree if these are relevant to the post being applied for.
- Other forms of relevant higher education, periods of study and similar academic activities.

b. Assessment of academic qualifications

- The work submitted is identified, characterised and assessed:
  1. The assessment should contain a complete list of the works submitted, stating their title, name of periodical (if appropriate), and place and year of publication. If the work has not been published, the form in which it is available should be provided.
  2. Characterisation of work: Typical characterisations are: Dissertation, PhD thesis, doctoral thesis, popular presentation, paper, review etc.
  3. The assessment of the work is the exclusive responsibility of the committee. The committee should emphasise which relevant qualifications the applicant has demonstrated on the basis of this work with respect to the specific post applied for, so that what is presented is a real assessment and not simply a description of the work. Taking into consideration the category of the position applied for and the job description, the assessment of the applicant's academic production can include degree of originality, academic breadth and depth, productivity (seen in relation to the enclosed list of publications). Academic relevance in relation to the job description should always be included.
  4. The material referred to: Assessment of academic qualification should be undertaken on the basis of the material the applicant has cited. The assessment committee cannot on its own account include non-cited material in its assessment, but it can recommend to the dean that the applicant should have the opportunity to allow other academic material to be included in the assessment. In this case a deadline is set of which all applicants are informed. If the committee finds itself unable to make a satisfactory assessment of one or more applicants on the basis of the material cited, it can recommend to the dean that further material is requested from this/these applicants.

Declaration of co-authorship: The chairman of the assessment committee can request that the dean ensures that the applicant provides a declaration of co-authorship in the event that there are one or more co-authors of a work cited and that the applicant has not already submitted a declaration from the co-author(s) regarding the extent and character of their individual share of the work. The weight carried by the work in the assessment will be in proportion to the applicant's share and to the quality of the work. This weighting should be evident from the assessment.

c. Assessment of teaching qualifications

- Assessment of teaching qualifications is undertaken on the basis of the teaching documentation submitted by the applicant.

d. Assessment of other qualifications required (stated in the relevant job advertisement)

- Other qualifications might be research management, supervision of research students, international posts, editorial posts and administrative qualifications.

e. Concluding overall assessment of the applicant

- The concluding overall judgement of the applicant should include a summary of the committee's assessments of the applicant's qualifications in relation to the post in question. In conjunction with the overall judgement the committee should give reasons for its statement as to whether the applicant is found to be qualified or not qualified for the post.
- Attention should be paid in the overall judgement to the requirements regarding qualifications cited in the job advertisement and to the provisions of the circular regarding conditions of employment for individual job categories, including the weighting of teaching qualifications in relation to academic qualifications. The overall judgement should not result in a statement that the applicant is in general qualified for a particular job category, but should relate to competence as regards the demands made by the actual post in question.
- The committee's statement as to the degree to which the applicant is qualified should be unambiguous and unconditional. No grading in the assessment of qualifications should be undertaken. However, the expressions 'not yet qualified' and 'not on the basis of the evidence presented' can be used.
- If there is disagreement among the members of the committee, it should be clear who regards the applicant as qualified and who does not, and the individual viewpoints should be substantiated individually.
- If the assessment committee is in agreement that an applicant is not qualified for the post, however, it can briefly limit itself to stating which qualifications are not fulfilled.

**6. The conclusion of the case and assessment fee**

The assessment committee submits its assessment to the dean who thereupon ensures that the formal requirements have been fulfilled. If the assessment does not constitute a satisfactory basis for a decision and/or does not fulfil the formal requirements, it is returned to the assessment committee to be supplemented or reworked. Immediately following any reworking the faculty sends each applicant that part of the assessment that relates to him/her, including the general introduction.

Any comments from applicants about the assessment are sent to the committee for comment. The applicant in question is informed of this comment.

**Assessment fee for members of assessment committees**

Each external member of the assessment committee will receive a standard assessment fee for the assistance. The assessment fee is based on the respective type of position as well as number of applicants. Once the assessment work has been finalized, the external members of the assessment committee will receive an assessment fee form for that purpose.