

Model for pedagogical qualification at Umeå University

Background

The system that allows university teachers to apply for pedagogical qualifications currently exists at several Swedish higher education institutions, others are adopting the system or are considering doing so. The overall picture is that pedagogical qualifications are likely to become an obvious feature at Swedish universities and colleges in the coming years.

In Umeå University's vision document, *Vision 2020*, it says that a pedagogical qualification system contributes to providing more skilled teachers. The model for pedagogical qualification (ref. FS 1.2.2-986-14) that was developed by the Education Strategy Council (Utbildningsstrategiska rådet, USSR) in cooperation with the Centre for Educational Development (Universitetspedagogik och lärandestöd, UPL), has been successfully used over two application periods. In total, 147 teachers have applied for pedagogical qualifications, if we include the 20 teachers who applied during the pilot test in 2013. 108 of them have been appointed as a qualified or excellent teacher, including 10 excellent teachers that were first appointed as qualified teachers.

The pedagogical qualification model was evaluated in the spring of 2016 (Ref. FS 1.2.2-986-14). The evaluation was based on the views of the candidates, teachers who have already been appointed, experts, heads of departments, the HR secretary and members of the Board for higher education pedagogical qualification (Nämnden för högskolepedagogisk meritering, HPM).

The evaluation gives a predominantly positive picture. Respondents stated that they appreciate the initiative, that it gives teachers the opportunity to gain pedagogical qualifications, that pedagogical interest and expertise are valued and that this will strengthen the quality of teaching. Important critical comments concerned the interpretation of the criteria and indicators which are used as the basis for assessment, and which proposed level these result in. In addition, there were comments regarding the vagueness of the application instructions, the application procedure and other/additional information.

One of the Education Strategy Council's working groups, consisting of faculty education leaders and representatives of the Centre for Teaching and Learning and the Planning Office, has proposed an updated model of pedagogical qualification (Appendix 1) based on the findings of the evaluation.

The overall goal of Umeå University's model for higher education pedagogy qualification is to contribute to continuously increasing the quality of education within the university by:

- encouraging teachers to develop a high level of pedagogical skills
- recognising and rewarding the high level of our teachers' pedagogical skills
- encouraging departments and faculties to create good conditions for pedagogical development
- having clearly defined criteria for higher education pedagogical proficiency, and
- assessing and rewarding these skills based on this proficiency.



Decision proposal

The Vice-Chancellor has decided:

- to establish a model for pedagogical qualification at Umeå University in accordance with the Appendix, to apply until further notice
- that the Chairman of the Board for higher education pedagogical qualification (HPM) is the pro-vice-chancellor or deputy vice-chancellor in charge of education
- to commission each faculty and student union to appoint representatives to the Board for higher education pedagogical qualification (HPM).

Anders Fällström
Pro-vice-chancellor

Rapporteur Katarina Winka,
Centre for Educational Development (UPL)

Appendix 1: Procedure for pedagogical qualification at Umeå University

Sent to: Vice-Chancellor, Pro-vice-chancellor, Deans, Administrative Directors, University Directors, the Centre for Educational Development (UPL), the HR department.