

## TITLE OF DOCENT

By decision of the President of Aalto University on 12 February 2010, Aalto University has granted the title of docent (*dosentti*) without application to those appointed docents prior to 1 January 2010 as follows:

- those appointed docents permanently are granted the title until the retirement age set forth in the collective agreement of universities, and
- those appointed for a fixed term are granted the title until the end of that fixed term.

In accordance with the new Universities Act, the institution of docent continues to be viewed as an important scientific resource for universities, although the title of docent has changed from an academic position into an honorary title. According to the Universities Act, a university may award the title of docent to a person who has comprehensive knowledge of his or her own field, a capacity for independent research or artistic work demonstrated through publication or some other manner, and good teaching skills (Universities Act 558/2009, Section 89).

Aalto University will continue to grant the title of docent for an indefinite term for persons who meet the qualification requirements set forth in the Act.

As a rule, an Aalto University docent must meet the following requirements:

- (i) in addition to a doctoral degree or artistic merits considered equivalent to one:  
  
an independently conducted and high-quality work of science or arts which in terms of the quantity and quality of publications or of the artistic output meets the requirements set for a good doctoral dissertation and doctoral degree. The publications counted as qualifications for the title of docent should primarily include those published by major international scientific forums.
- (ii) good teaching skills

Demonstrated activity in the scientific community and academic leadership may be considered additional qualifications.

As a rule, Aalto University may grant the title of docent to one Aalto University school. Aalto University may grant the title to more than one school, but only one title of docent per person may be granted for a given school. Mainly, the title of docent is proof of a certain level of scientific competence and it is not recommended that university professors apply for the title of docent. Titles like Adjunct Professor or Visiting Professor are used instead for employing persons on a professorial level (see the Aalto University Policy and Procedures document *Other Academic Positions*). The prospective candidates for a docentship should have a clear connection to Aalto University. The candidates are requested to first consult with a relevant department head before submitting an application. The department head must give a motivation for the suitability of the docentship vis-à-vis the research of the department.

The Aalto University schools should carefully consider the fields of specialisation for the proposed docents. As a rule, the fields of the docents should be defined broadly enough to correspond to the research fields and areas of study of the school instead of reflecting subtle differences within research fields. The phrase 'with a particular focus on' is not used in titles of docent at Aalto.

The application and grant procedure for the title of docent at the Aalto University schools follows the procedure described below..

1. The person applies for the title of docent with an application addressed to the Dean. The application should include relevant documents for assessing the scientific and/or artistic competence and the teaching competence of the candidate. The application is submitted to the HR Manager of the school in charge of the field of the applicant.
2. The Head of Department of the relevant field will give a statement to the Dean on the suitability of the docentship vis-à-vis the research of the department, and propose a minimum of two experts to assess the competence of the candidate for the title of docent. If the candidate has previously worked at the department and/or cooperated with its researchers, at least one of the experts must be external to the department.
3. The experts are appointed by the Dean.
4. The candidate may be invited to give a public demonstration of teaching skills. The Teaching Competence Assessment Committee of the school may review the teaching competence of the candidate.
5. After the receipt of the expert statements, the Dean hears the tenure track committee of the school.
6. The Dean decides on the grant of the title of docent.

As necessary, the Aalto University schools may issue more detailed guidelines on the application procedure for the title of docent at the level of the school.

Aalto University recommends the translation *title of docent* of the Finnish title *dosentti*.