

Docent Lectures at the Faculty of Science, Stockholm University

The docent lecture is meant to demonstrate the candidate's teaching skills, and is given after an application for promotion to docent has been approved by the Faculty's docent evaluation group. The lecture is a test of the candidate's ability to conduct teaching of the highest quality. The choice of teaching method is up to the candidate, and it is not necessary to use aids such as PowerPoint. The principal basis of assessment is the candidate's ability to communicate knowledge to a group of students in a teaching setting. The title of the lecture is proposed by the Head of Department in consultation with the lecturer and, where appropriate, the section's representative in the evaluation group.

The docent lecture is a teaching examination; it may contain elements of the candidate's own research, but a pure research seminar is not acceptable. The content should be related to a broad academic research problem. The lecture may contain a general introduction to a course, but most of the lecture should be devoted to a scientifically¹ based presentation. The lecture should also be seen as an introduction of the candidate to colleagues and students at the section, and it should demonstrate the candidate's oral presentation skills. The 45-minute lecture should be held in Swedish or English and should correspond to a lecture in a second-cycle course. It is customary to hold a Q&A session after the lecture, chaired by the representative of the evaluation group. The candidate is not required to allow time for questions, unless the questions are considered to be an important part of the teaching element.

After the lecture, the attending members of the evaluation group meet with the relevant professor and, where appropriate, the director of studies to write an assessment which is to be sent to the Office of Science. If the lecture is approved, the Dean of the Faculty will shortly thereafter appoint the candidate as docent. If the lecture is not approved, a date is set for another lecture, which usually takes place at least six months after the first attempt to give the candidate time to prepare and improve.

The docent lecture is a unique opportunity for candidates to demonstrate their teaching skills to colleagues in their section. Serious preparation by a researcher at the level of associate professor typically results in approval. However, if the lecture is considered to be poorly prepared or otherwise inadequate, it will not be approved. Thus, we want to emphasise that the lecture is a genuine test, not just a formality.

¹ This includes the natural sciences, mathematics and teaching methods within these fields.