

Excellent Teacher Practitioner

The document is based on a memorandum from the working group on merit systems at the MN-UiB Faculty¹, decision by the Faculty Board 16. June 2016², Announcement - Excellent Teaching Practitioner (ETP) 30. June 2016³ and a memorandum from the meeting of the Steering Group for assessment of applications for status of ETP. The document has been revised in connection with the new announcement the 13th of April 2018 and translated and adapted for dissemination to UNIS staff.

The merit system Excellent Teacher Practitioner (ETP)/Fremragende underviser (Fund) and the Faculty's Pedagogical Academy were approved by the Faculty Board at the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, UiB, June 16th, 2016. UNIS joined the ETP merit system in autumn 2017 (22nd of October). The merit system is part of the UiB and UNIS's mechanisms and measures for enhancing educational quality. The aim is to reward and give visibility to extraordinary efforts for quality development in education, to raise the status of teaching cf. research, and strengthen a collegial teacher culture with a scholarly approach to teaching.

The merit system at MN-UiB is inspired by an equivalent system used at the Pedagogical Academy at LTH, Lund University in Sweden⁴ and their model of pedagogical competence (Olsson et al., 2010, Olsson & Roxå 2013). It includes arguments that emerged during the development of merit systems at UiB, NTNU and UiT, relevant in a Norwegian context.

Teachers awarded the status of ETP at UNIS are expected to contribute to a collegial teaching culture, based on the principles of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). This can for example be done by initiating and participating in professional and pedagogical development through collegial forums, as well as mentoring of colleagues. Teachers awarded the status of ETP at UNIS will receive a membership at the MN-Faculty's Pedagogical Academy, which mandate is to facilitate these collegial responsibilities, spread-of-best-practice and further educational development.

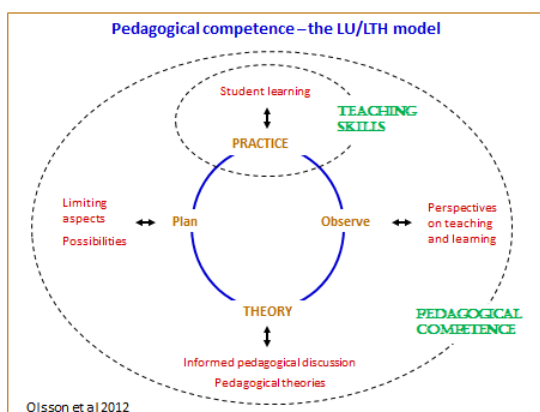


Fig. 1 The relationship between teaching and pedagogical competence. Olsson et al. 2010

¹ https://wiki.uib.no/matnat/images/e/e2/Beskrivelse_og_kriterier_for_tildeling.pdf

² http://www.uib.no/sites/w3.uib.no/files/attachments/42-etablering_av_meriteringsordning_excellent_teaching_practitioner_0.pdf

³ https://wiki.uib.no/matnat/images/c/c4/ETP_utlysing.pdf

⁴ <https://www.lth.se/genombrottet/lths-pedagogiska-akademi/>

Criteria for awarding the status of ETP / Fund at UNIS:

The status as Excellent Teacher Practitioner is awarded on the basis of an application/ teaching portfolio and a subsequent assessment and interview by an evaluation committee. In the application and attached documentation the applicant must describe, analyze, discuss and document systematic and targeted work to enhance educational quality focusing on four main criteria based on the principles behind the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning:

1. **Focus on student learning**

- The applicant has a clear focus on student learning in all of his/her teaching and learning activities
- The applicant considers the relationship between teaching method, learning outcomes, and assessment method in relation to learning
- There is a clear and intentional connection between the applicant's teaching and learning views and philosophy and activities
- The applicant has a good relationships with the students, seeking and reacting constructively to their feedback

2. **A clear development over time**

- The applicant strives consciously and systematically to develop his/her teaching, both in form and content, to support student learning
- The applicant has ideas and plans for continued development of his/her pedagogical competence and teaching practice in the future

3. **A scholarly approach**

- The applicant plans, investigates, assesses and modifies his/her teaching practice to best support student learning
- The applicant reflects on his/her teaching and learning activities based on educational theory and knowledge of discipline didactics
- The applicant's teaching is research based, both in the sense that the educational content is based on updated and relevant disciplinary research, and that students use elements of the research process in their learning

4. **A collegial attitude and practice**

- The applicant shares experiences with others, and interacts constructively with students and colleagues to develop teaching and educational quality
- The applicant cooperates with others through mutual exchange and sharing, for example through discussions, conferences and publications
- The applicant contributes to reaching the strategic goals for educational quality at the institution

Application

In the application, the teacher should explain how he or she has worked consciously and systematically to improve teaching quality over time in order to promote and develop the students' learning. Additionally, the applicant must show how he or she has shared their experiences with others and contributed to the community.

Based on literature and other sources, the applicant should discuss and reflect on their choice of teaching and assessment methods, and illuminate how he or she has developed their teaching connected to student learning and teaching.

The application must include documentation in the form of selected examples from the teachers own teaching practice, which show what, how and why the teaching was conducted in the chosen manner, and how those choices and practices support student learning. Examples must be supported by documentation of the educational scope and content, impact or influence on student learning, and of how the applicant has dealt with and used the experiences and feedback.

The design and content of the application have to be linked to the criteria described above.

The content of the application and attachments

1. The application – teaching portfolio

The main application document consists of a **personal teaching portfolio**, with examples that document the applicant's qualifications and practice towards the governing criteria. An important part of the portfolio is personal reflections on teaching and learning, in relation to pedagogical theory and literature and based on the applicant's own experiences and knowledge. The portfolio must show how the teacher views the relationship between teaching and learning in their own practice, and through examples and cases highlight the teacher's teaching philosophy, development and competence. The application should include documentation that supports the cases and reflections made.

- The application should provide insight into how the teacher understands the relationship between learning and teaching in his/her teaching practice.
- Through examples from own teaching practice and chosen themes, the applicant should explain and justify his / her personal teaching philosophy and teaching qualifications. The choice of examples should be argued for, and should highlight and extend aspects and circumstances which emerge as important in the light of the teacher's teaching philosophy.
- The application must document how the applicant's contribution helps meet the institutions and unit's strategies for education quality.
- The application must include documentation that supports the applicant's examples and chosen themes used in the teaching portfolio.

The application should not exceed 10 pages, including discussion of examples from own teaching.

2. Teaching CV that documents

- Pedagogical competence and training towards basic competence in University pedagogics

- Practical teaching experience
- Educational R & D (research and development work)
- Experience sharing, dissemination and publishing related to teaching activities and educational development - both inside and outside their own academic environment
- Awards and prizes

3. Interview

Candidates considered to fulfill the criteria for ETP status are called in for an interview. The interview shall complement the application and teaching portfolio, especially with regard to pedagogical principles/philosophy and own teaching practice - and how these constitute an integrated whole. The interview will mainly follow the application so that the teacher will have the opportunity to extend and develop themes and examples further.

Assessment

The most central part of the assessment is the teacher's application / teaching portfolio. Assessment is done qualitatively according to the criteria described above and with two main perspectives: the **applicant's holistic approach** and the **degree of scholarly approach** to teaching and teaching development.

The ETP status is awarded for a deliberate and well-developed educational practice within the discipline, and the evaluation committee is primarily composed of representatives (peers) from relevant disciplines, supplemented by student representatives and representatives with experience in assessment of educational competence. Members of the Faculty's Pedagogical Academy are part of the committee, and external representation among the reviewer is ensured through members from other institutions. The committee is headed by the Faculty's Vice Dean of Education.

Assessments are made in subgroups that are compiled according to the following principle:

- The subgroups have three members; one member from the steering group (group leader), one member with pedagogical background and competence, and one external member.
- All sub-groups have both male and female members
- The reviewers in the subgroups should not consider applicants from their own departments and must assess their eligibility in relation to the current applicants

The subgroups are responsible for conducting a thorough assessment of the applications based on the criteria. An assessment report will be prepared and the subgroups shall also provide a recommendation on whether the applicant should be called for an interview and whether the application shows that the criteria for receiving the status as Excellent Teacher Practitioner are fulfilled.

The Steering Group reviews all applications and assessment reports, and makes a final decision to call for an interview. Interviews with qualified applicants are conducted by members of the Steering Group.

The Steering Committee sends the final assessment reports and recommendation to the Faculty Board, which make final decisions on awarding status as Excellent Teacher Practitioner and membership in the Pedagogical Academy.

Assessment of applicants – The reviewers work and report

An important purpose of the merit system is to support teachers' development. The individual assessment report - whether it recommends ETP status, or not – should therefor provide useful feedback to the applicant for further development.

In order to qualify for the ETP status, applicants must fulfill all criteria and document this in scope and character through the application/teaching portfolio and documentation. To be awarded ETP status, all criteria must undoubtedly be met.

The applicant is assessed according to each of the four criteria areas, and the report describes and evaluates the applicant's qualifications against each criterion. The assessment is done qualitatively according to the criteria and with two main perspectives: the applicant's holistic approach and the **degree of scholarly approach** to teaching and development of teaching. The report concludes with a general evaluation and recommendation.

The interview with the applicants shall complement the application and the teaching portfolio, especially with respect to teaching philosophy and own teaching practice - and how these constitute an integrated whole. The interview will mainly follow the application so that the teacher will have the opportunity to extend and develop the chosen themes and examples.

References

Thomas Olsson & Torgny Roxå (2013): Assessing and rewarding excellent academic teachers for the benefit of an organization, *European Journal of Higher Education*, 3:1,40-61.

Thomas Olsson, Torgny Roxå & Katarina Mårtensson (2010): Pedagogical competence – a development perspective from Lund University. In: Ryegård, Å. Ed. *A Swedish perspective on Pedagogical Competence*. Uppsala University, pp. 121-132