Rules on the functions of evaluation committees and the recruitment and promotion of university teachers at Bifröst University

These rules apply to the recruitment and promotion of assistant professors/specialists, associate professors, and professors at Bifröst University.

1. Legislation in force relating to the recruitment, promotion, and evaluation of qualifications
The Higher Education Institutions Act No. 63/2006. Also considered is the Act on Public Higher Education Institutions No. 85/2008. Rules on the recruitment of employees and their promotion are to be found in the Bifröst University Regulation.

2. Recruitment for an academic position
The Rector makes decisions on establishing new academic positions upon a proposal from the respective department and having received the approval of the Board of Governors.

Given the Rector’s approval, all new academic positions shall be publicly advertised, cf. Article 10 of the Bifröst University Regulation.

Applications for new positions or promotion shall be addressed to the Rector, who attests the receipt of applications by way of a letter to the applicants.

The applications shall be accompanied by information on the applicants’ teaching and scientific record, publications and research, as well as certificates of their studies and career. Furthermore, copies of scientific monographs and articles, published or not, which applicants wish should be taken into consideration shall be enclosed with the application. In the case of more than one authorship of a publication, the applicants shall describe their contribution to the work. It is also necessary that the applications mention projects the applicants have worked on, are working on or have plans for. Furthermore, it is expected that the applicants enclose testimonials about their teaching and management experience as applicable.

3. Promotions to academic positions
As is stated in Article 12 of the Bifröst University Regulation, it is permissible, without advertisement, to promote an assistant professor to the position of associate professor and an associate professor to the position of professor upon the evaluation of the University’s Promotion Committee. The application for such a promotion shall be processed in accordance with Article 12 of the Bifröst University Regulation. The final decision on a promotion lies with the Rector, but no one may, however, be granted promotion unless the majority of the Promotion Committee holds the respective party to be qualified for promotion.

The goal of the Bifröst University promotion system is to motivate academic employees and further their professional activity and success, thus improving the quality of teaching and research at Bifröst University. The Evaluation System for Public Universities is used for the professional evaluation of performance and outcome in research, teaching, and management.

3.1 Applications for promotion
An applicant for promotion hands in an application accompanied by an account of research activity, teaching experience, management experience, and other comparable activities.

When the Promotion Committee has reached a decision, the Rector estimates whether the promotion is to be granted, among other things on the basis of the opinion of the Promotion Committee. Should
the Rector reach the conclusion that the promotion is to be denied, he must substantiate that conclusion.

3.2 Minimum points for each work segment in the process of evaluation in connection with recruitment and promotion
It is understood that there exists a traditional division of work segments between research, teaching, and management, cf. points in table 1. Under certain conditions, the evaluation committee may impose higher or lower requirements. This refers to certain conditions such as the great emphasis put on the University’s close relations with the economic sector. Should the evaluation committee depart from the minimum points for each work segment regarding teachers or specialists, which are stated in these rules, this must be specially justified since it would be a deviation from the principle.

Applicants for promotion to professorship shall be active in research and must have demonstrated significant scientific competence and initiative.

Table 1. Minimum points for each work segment of teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Teaching</th>
<th>Management, service, other</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor/Specialist</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. The function of evaluation committees at Bifröst University
In order to evaluate the qualifications of applicants for the positions of professor, associate professor, or assistant professor/specialist, the Rector appoints a three-member evaluation committee.

An evaluation committee shall evaluate each candidate in such a way as to make it perfectly clear whether or not s/he is considered qualified to hold the respective position. It assesses whether the education and other qualifications of the applicant are, to all intents and purposes, relevant for the advertised field of study. An evaluation committee’s opinion must include a reasoning for its conclusion about the applicants’ competence as well as all relevant information which the committee believes will be of assistance to the Rector in making the final decision on recruitment or promotion. Should disagreement arise within an evaluation committee, votes must be cast individually for each applicant, whereby committee members are required to take a position. Members in minority may explain the reasons for their position in a separate reasoned verdict. Should an applicant be found unqualified, the evaluation committee must explain that conclusion.

Should an evaluation committee consider an applicant qualified for a higher position than the one being advertised, this shall be noted in the committee’s verdict. It is, however, not necessary to present arguments for this opinion, as opposed to the advertised position. An evaluation committee shall not rank the qualified applicants with regard to the position in question unless the Rector has requested this.

At the beginning of the verdict of an evaluation committee, the prerequisites, data, and sources which the evaluation is based on shall be described, as well as the committees procedure in evaluating the applicant. The committee’s verdict shall include the applicant’s resume and list of publications accompanying the application.
An evaluation committee is permitted to request additional material from the applicants. In this regard, the committee shall ensure the equality of the applicants.

An evaluation committee shall carry out its duties as quickly as possible and it shall, in general, have commenced its work within a month as from the application deadline.

Upon the commencing of an evaluation committee’s task, the application data shall be delivered to the University’s File Manager for archiving.

5. Evaluation of the qualifications of applicants
In the following, the guidelines which the Evaluation Committee must bear in mind when assessing the qualifications of applicants will be described. These guidelines are more or less equally applicable to recruitment and promotion.

5.1 Preconditions
Bifröst University is a scientific education and research institute. The University is obliged to carry out teaching and research, vocational training, and research related to postgraduate education. This main objective of Bifröst University must be taken into account by an evaluation committee when assessing the qualifications of university teachers.

Furthermore, evaluation committees must bear in mind that the work duties of academic employees at Bifröst University consist in research, teaching and management. In the following, each of these work segments will be discussed.

5.2 Education
As a rule, an applicant for the position of associate professor shall have finished doctoral or similar university studies consisting largely in the training of independence in the field of academic work.

An applicant for the position of professor shall as a rule have a doctoral degree or a similar university degree, which places utmost demands concerning independent research. Independent research may be regarded as equal to a doctoral degree if the candidate has completed an important and extensive research project or a number of related projects attesting to the candidate’s substantial knowledge of the respective field of study and her/his ability to apply its methods. The demand must be upheld that the results of such research have been published in a recognized context.

5.3 Research
In assessing research and development projects, their scientific value must be emphasized. Notice must be taken of their originality as well as their autonomy with regard to other research and publications, references to source material and work methods, innovation and utility. Furthermore, it is permissible to consider ongoing research, even though the results have not yet been published, given that the applicant describes its nature and scope and informs on the current state of affairs. It is found reasonable to consider final assignments in the applicants’ university studies (master’s and doctoral theses) when evaluating research and development projects. Also to be taken into consideration are published intellectual properties, scholarly publications, printed or copied, work on development projects, published course material, articles in Icelandic and foreign peer reviewed scholarly journals and books (collections), as well as articles in other journals and books, scholarly publications, and reviews. Furthermore, analytical tools, exams, and other resources created for practical professional application are to be considered. Moreover, translations, work in a visual and audio format, patents, and developed or adjusted computer programs shall be taken into consideration. Unpublished work may be considered, e.g. articles and scholarly lectures.
In evaluating research, it is permissible to appraise management experience which falls under the applicant’s field of expertise, e.g. the management and planning of long-term projects, the preparation and management of scholarly conferences, the editing of scholarly journals, and training.

Associate professors and professors shall demonstrate their indisputable competence and independent innovative contribution to knowledge. The applicants for the position of professor must be active in their field of expertise and must have demonstrated significant competence and initiative in scientific work. In addition to the general provisions on minimum requirements and evaluation of work segments, which have been discussed above, an evaluation committee shall consider the demands placed on applicants for comparable positions in recognized scientific institutions, both in Iceland and abroad.

5.4 Teaching
In evaluating teaching, emphasis shall be put on the usefulness of the applicant’s teaching for students.

Recruitment. The applicant shall enclose with the application a reasoned account explaining which aspects of the respective field s/he wants to put emphasis on, the work methods s/he intends to apply, and how s/he intends to evaluate her/his own work and that of students. Should the applicant have teaching experience at the university level or other education levels, an account thereof shall accompany the application, in addition to other relevant material regarding her/his teaching experience, e.g. the outcomes of teaching surveys and syllabi.

Promotion. As possible, the applicant’s teaching career shall come into consideration, e.g. the composition of course material and instructions, diversity and innovation in teaching methods, initiative in the development and reformation of teaching approaches, and efforts to motivate students to adopt independent and scholarly methods or to engage in joint projects, where applicable. Moreover, the administration and initiative with regard to the organization of study subjects and courses as well as the presentation of development and innovation in the respective employee’s field of study shall be taken into consideration. In addition, cooperation with foreign institutions and specialists as well as affiliations with Icelandic institutions shall be taken into account. Furthermore, the supervision of students’ final projects shall be evaluated.

In assessing teaching, the testimonials of the respective department or study programme or those of students may be considered, in addition to an assessment of teaching if possible. An evaluation committee is permitted to use data which have been acquired in relation with an internal review of the quality of teaching at Bifröst University.

5.5 Management
In assessing the quality of management, emphasis shall be placed on the initiative and leadership of applicants, their competence in independent organization and planning, as well as their ability to collaborate with others on administrative work.

It is not always possible to distinguish clearly between management, research, and teaching. Therefore, it may sometimes be reasonable to regard this work segment as a part of the other two, but in that case, care must be taken not to count it twice.

Segments to be evaluated may be divided into two parts:

a) Experience of management and planning. These are items which the applicant can verify with data suitable for evaluation: (1) The planning of independent or integrated courses. (2) Management
data composed by the applicant or in the composition of which the applicant has taken part (testimonials, opinions, drafts of rules or regulations, etc.). (3) Participation in committees for which the applicant has been appointed or elected. (4) Participation in boards and councils with a power of decision, both in Iceland and internationally. (5) Participation in scientific and scholarly societies. (6) Other management experience of general nature.

b) **Personality traits which are relevant for management and communicability.** Material of the aforementioned nature bears witness to the managerial competence of the applicant. It attests both to efficiency and ambition in this field and the applicant’s reputation. Presumably, the opinions of others are governed by certain aspects of the applicant’s personality, e.g. sense of responsibility, leadership competencies, communicability, planning skills, and discernment. Therefore, the testimonials of an applicant’s seniors and colleagues may prove useful for the evaluation.

It is important that the evaluating parties receive as clear an information as possible regarding the managerial competencies of the applicant. It is a necessary precondition that an applicant with work experience names a referee (e.g. a director of an institution, department or study programme) or ensures that a referee sends a testimonial directly to the Rector. Likewise, it is necessary that applicants who have recently finished their studies seek a testimonial from teachers who are well acquainted with their post-graduate study career.

5.6 **Additional work experience**

The purpose of considering additional work experience of applicants, other than research, teaching, and management, is to shed a light on his/her competence from as many perspectives as possible. This applies to tasks and occupations which do not directly belong to the field of expertise of the advertised position, but require comparable competence, e.g. independent writing, reviews, presentations or programs on radio or television, other media work, the editing of books or magazines, public relations or active relations in cooperation with parties in Iceland or abroad, conference supervision, the directing of corporations or organizations, workshop supervision, membership in selection committees, development work, consulting work for companies or institutions, independent work as a specialist in another field of study, etc.

6. **On the processing of the evaluation committee verdict and concluding actions**

The evaluation committee shall submit its verdict to the Rector of Bifröst University along with application data and testimonials acquired by the committee. Should the Rector find the opinion flawed in some way or that the work of the committee is inadequate, then he may send the opinion back to the committee. The opinion of an evaluation committee is considered defective if it does not comply with the law, if the discussion on applicants and the reasoning is limited, if important information is missing or in the case of some other, evident deficiencies. An evaluation committee is obliged to respond to the Rector’s criticism. The Rector shall send each applicant that part of the evaluation committee’s verdict which concerns the respective applicant. The Rector gives applicants the opportunity to comment on the opinion in writing prior to the decision on recruitment. Should comments arrive from applicants, they shall be taken up with the evaluation committee. The evaluation committee is obliged to respond to such comments. Prior to the decision of recruitment, the Rector interviews the applicants who have been deemed qualified by the evaluation committee.

All application documents, the verdict of the evaluation committee, and other documents connected to the work of the committee shall be treated as confidential.

The Rector may authorize some other party to be responsible for official communication, e.g. for interviewing applicants and for communications with the evaluation committee.

7. **Entry into force**
These rules enter into force by the approval of the University Council and the affirmation of the Bifröst University Board of Governors.

Approved by the University Council on November 12, 2015.

Affirmed by the Board of Governors on November 13, 2015.