

Governing Document – Extension and Extension Appointments at SLU

Vision 2020

SLU is the leading European university in extension and collaboration with society

Overall goal for extension at SLU

Scientifically-based knowledge should contribute to sustainable use and management of biological natural resources

Key factors in achieving this goal are:

- 1) SLU extension in life and environmental sciences is based on research, education and environmental monitoring and assessment (Foma) of a very high international standard, i.e. in line with SLU's overall vision.
- 2) SLU organises sector-related operations in collaboration with society at large – relevant sectors, public authorities, trade and special interest organisations, the public. Operations are based on SLU's traditional sectoral role vis-à-vis the agricultural, forestry and fisheries sectors, including animal health and the entire food chain, as well as societal planning, the bioenergy sector and the biotechnology industry in a broad sense.
- 3) Internal collaboration between SLU faculties, departments, research teams and researchers is developed in order to utilise various potential internal synergies in a creative and resource-efficient manner.
- 4) Extension activities are organised, rendered visible and integrated in research, education and Foma.

Background information

The term 'collaboration' (samverkan) was incorporated in the Higher Education Act in 1997: "Institutes of higher education shall also *collaborate* with the surrounding community *and provide information* about their activities." The Higher Education Ordinance also provides that the assessment criteria to be used when appointing teaching staff include "the ability to *collaborate* with the surrounding community and *to provide information* about research and development work". (Higher Education Ordinance, ch. 4, s. 15). To date it has not been particularly common for collaboration/extension to be defined in appointment qualification profiles, or for academic appointments boards to place special emphasis on extension when assessing applicants. The distinction drawn in both the law and the ordinance between collaboration and information may be inferred to mean that collaboration/extension involves a more active dialogue and direct collaboration between an institute of higher education and the world around it. The term 'third mission' is sometimes used somewhat loosely in the higher education sector to describe an unspecified mixture of various kinds of information activities,

involving extension elements. The use of this expression should be discontinued at SLU, particularly since it may here be confused with Foma (Research, Education and *Foma*).

As a sectoral university, SLU has a long and dynamic tradition of working with various sectors and public authorities in the fields of agriculture, forestry, horticulture, animal husbandry and animal health. This has gradually expanded to include collaboration in the fields of nature conservation and environment, the food chain, societal planning, the bio energy sector and the biotechnology industry in a broad sense. In the past, organised collaboration has been managed via special associate professorships in agriculture and veterinary medicine, for example, (researchers at professorial level), supported by 'principal consultants' (researchers with PhDs) in various fields. SLU has also engaged in activities of a more specifically advisory nature: 'the Consultant Department', whose staff did not conduct own research, instead assuming responsibility both for advisory services and synthesis and communication of research findings to the relevant sectors. These operations were discontinued a number of years ago, and the other services mentioned have also disappeared. Nonetheless, the mutual need for collaboration with these sectors remains unchanged, and SLU is therefore now heavily committed to developing its collaboration and extension activities. The Quality and Impact Evaluation (KoN 09) also pointed out very clearly that the outside world expects SLU to increase and clarify its extension activities. The clearest response to this expectation is our announcement of around 20 appointments where successful candidates will conduct their own high-quality research and collaborate with the surrounding community. The aim is that this initiative should promote skills development among SLU's stakeholders and also benefit the community as a whole. Ultimately, this initiative is also intended to improve research funding at SLU.

Specific extension objectives

Extension activities at SLU should be conducted in accordance with the three goal areas defined by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education in consultation with Sweden's institutes of higher education (HSV 2004:38R *Cooperation in higher education with the surrounding community*):

- Extension for *knowledge development and growth*, i.e. involvement by institutes of higher education in the knowledge and innovation system.

SLU's aim is to make good use of scientific findings by reciprocal knowledge transfer between SLU and sector-related stakeholders, by needs-driven research projects and commercialisation of scientific discoveries. A key task for SLU researchers within this aim is to identify and conduct a continuous dialogue with stakeholders in the surrounding community with an interest in the subject. SLU researchers also have a clear role to play as partners in the giving of advice and consultative opinions in sector-related activities vis-à-vis public authorities, relevant sectors and the public.

- Extension for *better education*, i.e. dialogue between institutes of higher education and the surrounding community on the content and scope of education courses and programmes, and also:

By introducing extension as an integral component of first-cycle and third-cycle education programmes, SLU aims to bridge the gap between the university and trade and industry. This will be achieved by increased contact with sector-related activities, e.g., in the form of industrial doctorates and doctoral work based at companies and public authorities. Alumni activities are an

important form of extension, representing a means for SLU to make use of experience and re-establish contact with former students. Contract education programmes are another key extension task for SLU, offering a way to promote dialogue and knowledge exchange between the university and sector-related stakeholders.

- Extension for *democracy development*, i.e. work done by institutes of higher education in the fields of research communication and education of the public.
As at other Swedish institutes of higher education, SLU's researchers here have an important task in communicating knowledge acquired as a result of scientific work in a dialogue with the public, e.g., by way of public events, the media and popular scientific publications.

These extension goals will form the basis of SLU's continuing development in this field. However, extension will be developed giving particular consideration to SLU's traditional sectoral responsibility for agriculture, forestry and fisheries, including animal health and the entire food chain.

Extension and external collaboration organisation

The Vice-Chancellor has delegated to the *Assistant Vice-Chancellor for external cooperation* overall responsibility for SLU's national and international collaboration and extension, including the academic world and industry, public authorities and individuals. He is assisted by a *co-ordinator* (PhD level scientist), responsible for day-to-day collaboration and extension work. These two officers, together with the four faculty *assistant deans responsible for extension* make up SLU's Council for National and International Extension, to which an Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Council representative is co-opted. That representative is responsible for maintaining contact with Foma programme coordinators, who play a key role in contact with the outside world, particularly in extension with public authorities. All four faculties have set up *extension boards* (or the like) to further develop external collaboration and extension at faculty level. All SLU researchers should interact with the surrounding community to an appropriate degree. However, particular responsibility rests with the 20 or so internally-funded new extension appointees at SLU. This is taking place within the scope of SLU's institutional role.

Extension appointments

The new extension appointments at SLU represent an initiative unique in Sweden. The appointments are in the form of senior lectureships involving extension duties. This means that scientific proficiency forms the basis, pedagogical proficiency is a necessity, and extension proficiency is essential in order to be considered for a post. Required extension skills include excellence in maintaining a dialogue and a great interest in the outside world. Extension appointees must also have a sound knowledge of associated research fields so as to be able to act as an entry point to SLU activities in other areas for a broader category of stakeholders. Appointees should also be able to act as ambassadors for SLU as a whole in various external contexts. This will require knowledge and interest in a broad spectrum of SLU activities in the field of biological natural resources.

The emphasis in these appointments lies in developing extension processes that are closely integrated with research and teaching in the department/field. Appointees are expected to spend 50 per cent of their time on extension activities in receipt of direct government funding. They will spend 50 per cent of their time on their own advanced research and 50 per cent on extension

receiving direct government funding, of which stakeholder-related research may form part. Teaching is a natural component, but should not account for more than 20 per cent of working hours. Teaching may be related to both the research component and extension, whose respective shares of working time will then decrease accordingly. Communication with the surrounding community forms part of extension duties, and will sometimes take the form of pure teaching duties. It takes a certain amount of time to acquire the requisite qualifications in the extension field. Some applicants may therefore already possess the qualifications for appointment to a readership/associate professorship. In all probability, some among them will also possess sufficient scientific qualifications for early promotion to professor.

Following a review of current departmental extension activities, the faculties have proposed subject areas for the appointments. These proposals have been coordinated and then approved by university management.

The appointments are being announced together to attract maximum attention among potential applicants, SLU's stakeholders and society at large. Each faculty board will decide appropriate departmental placement; faculty academic appointments boards will assess applicants (see instructions below) and the relevant heads of department will make final decisions on successful applicants.

It should be noted that only the extension component of the appointments (i.e. 50 per cent) will receive direct government funding. The other half must therefore be funded from the relevant department's budget appropriation, or from the appointee's external research funding.

The Council for National and International Extension will draw up criteria and regularly evaluate how well extension duties are being performed.

The Assistant Vice-Chancellor for external cooperation will be arranging annual 'extension conferences' attended by all senior lecturers with extension duties for joint development of these activities throughout SLU. Those already appointed to extension posts as field entomologist or field pathologist, for example, will attend the conferences as important sources of experience and role models.

Appointment procedure

Senior lectureship appointments are governed by "Appointment Procedures for SLU", dated 17 December 2009, which state, among other things, that *appointment of senior lecturers requires opinions obtained from two experts*. In assessing applicants for the post of senior lecturer with extension duties, opinions must be obtained from two experts in the relevant scientific field with extensive knowledge in the field of extension.

The Appointment Procedures further provide:

"In the appointment of professors and senior lecturers, importance shall be attached to the ability to collaborate with the outside community and to convey information about research and development work. The following shall provide guidance:

- An applicant must have been involved in the dissemination of information about the university's activities and research findings at the university.

- *An applicant must have facilitated beneficial utilisation of those findings.*
- *An applicant must have, in some other way, promoted the university's dialogues, contacts and collaboration with the society as a whole."*

This element will naturally be given much greater weight in assessment of applicants for the post of senior lecturer with extension duties (see the assessment criteria guidelines below).

Qualifications for the post of senior lecturer with extension duties

1. PhD or equivalent scientific expertise, or possession of other professional skills of relevance to the subject content of the post and the duties this post entails
2. University teaching qualification or equivalent skills acquired in some other way
3. Demonstrated pedagogical skills
4. Demonstrated extension skills
5. Demonstrated high level of ability in written and oral communication in Swedish and English

Anyone not possessing the qualification mentioned in 2. above will nonetheless be considered to possess the requisite qualifications if the subject content of the post so dictates, or there is otherwise particular reason for so deciding.

Duties involves extensive contact with Swedish stakeholders and with the international scientific community. A sound knowledge of both Swedish and English is therefore an additional requirement.

Equal care will be devoted to consideration of extension and pedagogical skills on the one hand, and scientific expertise on the other.

Assessment criteria for the post of senior lecturer with extension duties

Very great importance will be attached in the selection process to extension skills and scientific skill.

Great importance will also be attached to pedagogical skill.

In addition, importance will be attached to administrative skills of relevance to the subject content and duties of the post, as well as skill in developing and leading operations and staff at the university.

In assessing scientific skill, particular importance will be attached to scientific qualifications in the field of X(X) (normal procedures).

In assessing pedagogical skill, particular importance will be attached to teaching qualifications in the field of X(Y) (normal procedures).

In assessing extension skills, importance will be attached to documented experience of the following three extension areas, primarily with regard to extension of particular importance to the X(Z) field:

Extension services for skills development and growth, for example:

- Familiarity with the relevant sector
- Development of support for decision making in the private and public sectors
- Expert role vis-à-vis public authorities
- Grants awarded of an extension nature
- Active participation in R&D projects set up or driven with stakeholders
- In-service training and further training in the relevant sector
- Work on innovation and commercialisation of research

Extension for better education/training, e.g.:

- Production of teaching materials based on research and sector knowledge
- Arrangement and participation in research user forums
- Promotion of student contact with the outside world

Extension for democracy development, e.g.:

- Popular scientific productions
- Participation as an expert in the media
- Arrangement of public events in the field

Examples of indicators of extension proficiency

Proficiency in:

Extension for knowledge development and growth is demonstrated by, e.g., long-term research collaboration with the sector/trade and industry, supervising industrial doctorate students and industrial researchers, licensed patents, background documents for public authority policies, participation in trade associations/industrial reference groups/public authority scientific councils, arrangement of in-service training and further training in the public and private sectors, authorship of teaching materials for external use,

Extension for better education is demonstrated, e.g., by supervision of stakeholder-related M Sc theses, arrangement of study visits, invitation of external guest speakers, contact with potential employers of graduates, contact with alumni,

Extension for democracy development is demonstrated, e.g., by involvement in education of the public, contact between researchers and elected representatives, popular scientific activities via various channels and forums, production of scientific background material for decision making, participation in the public debate on educational and research issues,