



Unofficial translation

Åbo Akademi University is an internationally acknowledged research university with an extensive responsibility for providing education in Swedish in Finland. With its strong Nordic ties, Åbo Akademi University has an acclaimed and recognized position within research and education both nationally and internationally.

Appointment plan for an Assistant Professor or Associate Professor within the Strategic Research Profiling Area Solutions for Health (tenure track)

Åbo Akademi University (ÅAU) opens a position as **Assistant Professor** or **Associate Professor** within the Strategic Research Profiling Area Solutions for Health within the tenure-track career system. A tenure-track position offers the appointee an opportunity to obtain a tenured position and advancement to a full professorship, i.e. the highest level of the tenure track system. Depending on the experience and competence, the employee can be appointed to level one or two of the tenure track system: **Assistant Professor** (level one) or **Associate Professor** (level two).

The position as Assistant Professor or Associate Professor is part of the profiling area [Solutions for Health](#) and supports the [InFLAMES Flagship: Innovation Ecosystem Based on the Immune System](#), both funded by the Academy of Finland. The position is sited within the Biosciences cluster at the [Faculty of Science and Engineering](#), within the [Biocity community](#) and having close links to [Turku Bioscience Center](#).

Research within Solutions for Health is conducted in cooperation with the University of Turku, and participating faculties from Åbo Akademi University are the Faculty of Science and Engineering, the Faculty of Arts, Psychology and Theology, and the Faculty of Education and Welfare Studies. Central research areas within the profiling area are biovisualization, drug development and pharmaceutical sciences, organic chemistry and biochemistry, structural biology and bioinformatics, cell and molecular biology and materials research. Since 2020, Health Science, Psychology, Logopedics and Information Technology are also included in the profiling area.

The InFLAMES Flagship is a joint effort of Åbo Akademi University, the University of Turku and the associated ecosystem. It aims at being an internationally recognized, top-level, immunological research and development cluster attracting both researchers and business partners. It will produce break-through knowledge on immunological principles and diseases. The project focuses on inflammations, infections, immunology and cancer, thus complementing the profiling area Solutions for Health well. Innovations, internationally recognized scientists, an extensive state-of-the-art research infrastructure and intensive academy–industry interactions form the foundation of the InFLAMES Flagship research.

The Faculty of Science and Engineering offers open access to and joint use of the research infrastructure with academic actors and with industry. The Faculty is also part of the unique ecosystem for innovation in the health sector in Turku, bringing together four higher education institutions, the hospital district, and about 100 bio and pharmaceutical companies.

1. The field of activity

The main focus of the position is tied to computer-based solutions to biological and medical problems related to inflammatory diseases, cancer and the biology of aging, and is based on relevant ongoing research at Åbo Akademi University and closely connected to the InFLAMES Flagship. The Assistant Professor's/Associate Professor's field of activity particularly includes conducting interdisciplinary research in the research field Life Sciences. The research field of the position is supported by local strengths in biotechnology and infrastructure, established national and international research networks and units, and by strong research in adjacent areas where subject knowledge can be applied.

Tasks of the Assistant Professor/Associate Professor include conducting high-level research, teaching at all levels of education, and active participation in the academic development and in societal interaction and international cooperation within the field. The emphasis for the position will be on research-related tasks, and research within the position should support the goals of the InFLAMES Flagship.

In the Personnel Guideline for Åbo Akademi University is generally stated the assistant professors' and associate professors' duties and tasks. Assistant professors' tasks are comprised primarily of research intended to deepen and expand the relevant field of research. Assistant professors are usually required to contribute to teaching and supervision, dedicating one third of their working hours to these duties.

Associate professors' tasks include conducting independent research, leading research projects and procuring research funding. Associate professors participate in teaching and supervision in general a third of the working time.

2. Employment within the tenure track career system

A person holding a tenure track position on level 1 or 2 is employed on a fixed-term contract of employment.

An **Assistant Professor** on the first level of the tenure track career system is employed for a period of 3 years. Upon a successful evaluation, an Assistant Professor will advance to the next level, or alternatively, the employment term can be extended by 2 years.

An **Associate Professor** on the second level of the tenure track career system is employed for a period of 4 years. Successful evaluation and undeniably established competence as professor facilitate advancement to the next level. Alternatively, the employment term can be extended by 2 years.

Åbo Akademi University agrees to offer the recruited individual the opportunity to advance to the next level by setting clearly defined goals for each stage. Decisions on possible advancement to the next level are made within an agreed timeframe, thus enabling the employees to evaluate and plan their career. The idea is that the individual employed on the tenure track level 1 or 2 shall have the ability to advance through the tenure track career system to the highest level, which is also considered in the employment decision. The evaluation process is initiated a minimum of one year before the fixed-term employment contract ends.

At the beginning of an employment as Assistant Professor or Associate Professor, the criteria for successful work performance shall be reviewed. The goals to be reached are stated in a separate

appendix to the contract of employment. The Dean decides on the general and specific targets for each stage of the tenure track within 2 months from the start of the employment. The set criteria shall be considered at the assessment carried out before making a decision about continuation of the employment. In the assessment for advancement to the next level, attention is paid, among other things, to the scientific research carried out during the period of employment, including scientific publications, and the raising of research funding. In addition, experience in teaching and supervision, contribution to pedagogical development as well as international assignments will be evaluated. When needed, Swedish skills will be included in the assessment.

More information about the tenure track career system is available in the Personnel Guideline for Åbo Akademi University (17 August 2017, revised 24 January 2019).

An individual salary system is applied at Åbo Akademi University. The salary setting for an Assistant Professor and an Associate Professor is according to the general collective agreement for universities. The requirement level of the employment depends on the appointee's qualifications and merits. In addition, a salary component based on individual work performance is added to the salary.

Teachers and researchers have a total working time of 1,612 hours per year. The detailed work tasks are defined in an annual work plan.

A recruitment committee is appointed by the Dean of the Faculty to support the decision-makers, i.e., the Dean and the Faculty Board, during all stages of the recruitment process. The composition and duties of the recruitment committee are stated in Article 12 of the Personnel Guideline for Åbo Akademi University (17 August 2017, revised 24 January 2019).

3. Qualification criteria for the tenure track position

The personnel to be hired shall have such an education and experience as is required for the successful execution of the relevant tasks and duties.

An **Assistant Professor** is required to have a doctoral degree, research experience and pedagogical competence. As a rule, the time elapsed since taking the Doctor's degree should not exceed 4 years.

An **Associate Professor** is required to have a doctoral degree, considerable research experience, potential to lead research teams and acquire research funding, experience from international research collaboration and formal pedagogical competence.

4. Evaluation criteria

Scientific competence

In the evaluation of scientific competence, the quality of the applicant's scientific publications and other research results, ability to lead research projects, as well as experience in international research or international assignments will be assessed. Particular attention in the evaluation of scientific competence for the position in question will be paid on the applicant's international publications and recent development in publishing activities as well as the ability to obtain external research funding. Participation in postgraduate education and supervision of doctoral candidates is considered a merit.

For an associate professor, experience of supervision of a doctoral thesis is considered especially meritorious. In addition to this, the applicant must show experience of applying and acquiring research funding.

Pedagogical competence

In the evaluation of teaching skills, the following will be considered: applicants' approach to teaching and learning, pedagogical training, teaching and supervision experience relevant for the position, course evaluations and assessment of the applicant's teaching, and participation in evaluation and pedagogical development. The results of a possible teaching demonstration will also be considered.

Interactive competence

For the assessment of interactive competence, attention is paid to co-operative skills, leadership and administrative experience, the ability to interact with the surrounding society, as well as international collaboration within the relevant field. The evaluation is based on a review of submitted documentation and interviews conducted in connection with the recruitment process.

In weighing the applicant's competence, the scientific merits account for 50 %, pedagogical competence for 30 % and interactive skills for 20 % of the evaluation. When assessing the applicant's merits, the time elapsed since taking the Doctor's degree as well as any leaves of absence such as maternity, paternity or parental leaves, military or non-military service or other leaves for a good reason will be considered.

An appointment will be based on an overall assessment of the applicant's potential for development and competences in relation to the necessary qualities to successfully carry out the tasks for the position.

The recruitment and evaluation takes place in accordance with the Åbo Akademi University principles on equality and equal treatment. Åbo Akademi University is working for equal gender distribution and diversity in all staff categories.

5. Language skills

The administrative language of Åbo Akademi University is Swedish. Language requirements for teachers at Åbo Akademi University are prescribed in Section 78 of the Universities Act (558/2009), and in the Guideline for proficiency in Swedish and Finnish required of teachers at Åbo Akademi University (approved by the University Board on 25 February 2010).

To be considered for a position, it is possible for an applicant to demonstrate the required language skills after the set application deadline has passed, if this will not delay the process.

Requirements for native Finnish citizens

For teaching and research positions at Åbo Akademi University, excellent proficiency in Swedish and the ability to understand Finnish are required. Excellent proficiency of Swedish is proved if:

1. The applicant has received school education in Swedish and has passed a written exam in Swedish as part of a Bachelor's or Master's degree, or
2. The applicant has passed the Åbo Akademi University test in Swedish, or
3. The appointee has passed the national Swedish language test with the grade excellent oral and written skills in Swedish, in accordance with the regulation for assessment of

knowledge of Finnish and Swedish in public administration, as defined by the law (481/2003).

If the applicant has passed a national Swedish-language test at level 6, the language skills must be proven in an additional language test in Swedish arranged by the Language Board of Åbo Akademi University.

If the certificate of passing the language test for state administration or a national language test is more than 10 years old, the language skills shall be demonstrated before the Language Board of Åbo Akademi University.

Oral and written knowledge of English is necessary for managing the duties of the position successfully.

Requirements for foreigners and non-native Finnish citizens

Foreigners and non-native Finnish citizens can be exempted from the requirement to have proficiency in Swedish and Finnish and still be eligible for the tenure track position as Assistant Professor/Associate Professor. However, as the administrative and teaching language of the university primarily is Swedish, the person appointed is recommended to acquire such knowledge of Swedish that he or she will be able to participate successfully in teaching and administrative tasks in Swedish in the future.

Oral and written knowledge of English is necessary for managing the duties of the position successfully.

6. Application

For a tenure track position, a written application is needed. Details about the application deadline is available in a separate announcement.

The application documents should include the following (in English):

1. A curriculum vitae (CV) and a complete list of publications in compliance with the TENK model (The Finnish National Board on Research Integrity)
<https://tenk.fi/en/advice-and-materials/template-researchers-curriculum-vitae>
2. Copies of degree diplomas and copies of language certificates.
3. A teaching portfolio. Instructions for the portfolio are available at
https://web.abo.fi/befattningar/Pedagogical_portfolio2021.pdf
4. A separate list of a maximum of 5 publications that the applicant has chosen to demonstrate his or her competence. The applicant should explain the choice of publications. The publications should be available electronically. The applicant will provide links to the publications in the list of publications or upload them to a separate system for file transfer.
5. A research plan (max. 5 pages).
6. A description of the applicant's view on the assignment and how the applicant plans to successfully manage the tasks, as well as reflection on the development of the research and teaching within the subject area (max. 3 pages).
7. Contact details to three referees, whom the recruitment committee may contact, if necessary.

7. The expert evaluators and their tasks

Upon a proposal of the recruitment committee, the Faculty Board will appoint three expert evaluators to give a written assessment about the applicants and their qualifications and merits. In selecting the experts, the different schools within the subject field represented by the applicants should be taken into account. Also in other respects, objectivity will be observed.

Before the expert evaluators are appointed, the applicants will be given an opportunity to comment on any legal challenges or other aspects as stated above with regard to the possible expert evaluators' eligibility. The comments must be submitted within 14 days from the time the possibility to comment on the intended expert evaluators has been offered to the applicants. Provisions concerning the possibility of legal restrictions on eligibility are stated in sections 27–29 of the Administrative Procedure Act (434/2003).

The expert evaluators will submit separate statements. The statements should be submitted within two months after the expert evaluators have been appointed, unless special circumstances justify that the statement is delayed. The expert evaluators are required to give motivated statements for the applicants they find as being the most qualified for the position. The experts shall give their motivated statements concerning the applicants for all tenure track levels as requested by the recruitment committee. Within each level, the expert evaluators shall place the applicants in ranking order. The expert evaluators must not participate in the further handling of the recruitment process after they have submitted their statements.

8. Demonstration of teaching skills and interview

After receiving the statements from the expert evaluators, the recruitment committee will decide on which applicants to invite to interview and teaching demonstration. Information about a possible teaching demonstration will be given later.

9. Proposal of appointment or decision on discontinuation

On basis of the written statement given by the recruitment committee, the faculty board decides on the most qualified for the position. The faculty board makes a proposal of appointment to the rector, or if none of the candidates is found to be qualified, proposes the process is discontinued.

A decision regarding qualifications and a proposal for appointment can also be made even if not all of the expert evaluators have submitted their statement, if

- the deadline for submitting the statement has passed, and
- statements have been received from at least two expert evaluators, and
- it is found that the remaining statements can be omitted without compromising an objective evaluation of the applicants