



XLIII / SULF GUIDES SERIES

Expedition guide for your career in academia





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Foreword

So, you find yourself on the career ladder in academia. If you are reading this, you have probably decided to set out on this great expedition. You have a dream.

We do not know how you got here. We do not know if you are a student with research ambitions; a doctoral candidate in that difficult period around a year before your thesis is supposed to be completed; a lecturer thinking about becoming a senior lecturer or distinguished teacher; or perhaps a senior lecturer wondering how to become a professor. Academic careers can look so incredibly different. There is also the possibility that you have had to switch between different types of fixed-term employment for a few years and sometimes asked yourself whether an academic career is really the right path for you.

Most books and articles about career planning focus on planning and how important it is. But in descriptions of real-life situations that we have read or heard, it is striking how many people say that they have just somehow ended up where they are and that it was never their plan. Perhaps you have never really dared to ask yourself that question or even thought about it. Whatever the case, there is a great risk that you will be led in directions you do not want to follow unless you have a clear picture of what you want.

This expedition guide is designed to help you see where the rocks are, where the waters are choppy and perhaps what you need to do to reach that lovely sandy beach. In short, we want to get you to talk to yourself with a future perspective in mind. Where that future is, no one but you knows. And remember: your career does not exist separately from your life. Not even in academia.

Mats Ericson
President of SULF

Key messages

1. Think actively and regularly about your objectives and the best way to achieve them.
2. A career can present many challenges, but above all it should be rewarding and satisfying. Ask yourself occasionally how your career feels.
3. Do not be afraid to change direction if/when your objectives change.
4. Knowledge is strength. Gather information about conditions and requirements before taking new steps.
5. Network as much as you can. Use your networks when you need them and give information back to them when you can.
6. Look after yourself – don't work too much and don't work for free.
7. Make sure that all promises and agreements are recorded in writing.
8. Learn about systems in order to be able to navigate through your career more easily.
9. Be a member of SULF and the unemployment insurance fund. Use the safety nets that are available when you need them.
10. There are no wrong career choices – as long as you are happy with the results.

Voices from the real world

Throughout this booklet you will find quotes from SULF members who have been generous enough to share their advice on building an academic career. The pictures used to illustrate the quotes are not true representations of the member quoted.



Work on the questions you really want to answer, together with the people you really want to work with and trust.

Mats Fredrikson
Professor of Clinical Psychology

Everything starts with a plan



What is a career?

What is a career? A traditional definition is an upward climb in an organisation to reach a higher position with higher pay, more responsibility and influence and more qualified tasks. Translated to the world of higher education, it could be the path from being a doctoral candidate to becoming a professor. But a career can be so much more. Fundamentally, it is about playing an active role in the development of your professional life.

That is why we define career as a movement, not necessarily upwards in every step, but as a personal development that provides greater knowledge, breadth or depth.

Only you know what a career means for you, but in order to avoid stagnating, it is important that you think about it. Then you can start moving. Do not think too long though, or opportunities may pass you by.

Career - a planned movement in working life, with the acceptance of chance, in order to develop towards increased knowledge and achieve greater independence, satisfaction, responsibility and influence.

What does planning your career involve?

It all starts with thinking about your goal. Where do you want to go? Why am I doing this? For one person, it may be a desire to become a professor, for another it may be about developing an area of knowledge, and for a third it may be about discovering something new in interactions with students. And these, of course, do not need to be contradictory or mutually exclusive. It is worth thinking about what exactly your passion is right from the start. Because if you are passionate about something, you have the potential to be really good at it.

"It is the way that is the labour's worth", wrote the poet Karin Boye, and that is probably true, but it makes a big difference if you are on your way to Pata-gonia or to Visingsö. Your packing and preparations need to be different. Your expectations too.

Making informed choices at the start can have a great impact on the future. So find out as much as you can about where you are going and what you can expect along the way. Having a plan can also be a big help if you unexpectedly need to move, for example in the event of downsizing, a shortage of work or the expiry of a fixed-term contract. If you have a plan, changes will be less traumatic.

But it's not just you who needs to know what your goals are. To be able to move and build a career in academia, you are dependent on others, and a career can also be described as a game of relationships on different levels, with gains and losses. There are opportunities to be part of exciting research groups, to write articles together or to present research at conferences or meetings. It is important to talk about what you want. To yourself and to others. Set goals, and let other people know about them. A clear vision is a way to unleash creativity, both in yourself and in others.

You may think it sounds cynical if we say that the most important thing in your career planning is to surround yourself with the right colleagues. But it is not that we want to encourage backslapping and nepotism. On the contrary. Openness about how things work gives greater transparency; and the fact remains that several people together think better than one person alone, and those who want to progress quickly travel alone, while those who want to go far travel together.

Our aim with this publication is to provide you with enough information to perform a risk analysis more easily and hopefully avoid the worst pitfalls. We can perhaps also help you answer the question "Is it worth it?"

Working in research and teaching is extremely meaningful and rewarding. Make sure that you have fun, that you develop and that you look after yourself along the way.

Seven questions to ask yourself about your future career

1. Where are you now?

What does your current situation look like? Family, living circumstances, financial situation etc.

2. What is important to you?

Work, but also your home, family, health, leisure activities etc.

3. Where do you want to go?

What does your final destination look like? If you could decide, where would you like to be when you are 67 years old and look back on your career? Are there any goals or milestones along the way? Do you know where you want to be in one year, in five years, or in ten years?

4. What do you want to experience along the way?

Do you know that you want to work abroad or in different sectors? Do you want to manage and lead others? Would you prefer to focus primarily on your research? Would you like to work with many others or in a small team?

5. What is prioritised and rewarded in the organisation you are in now?

When you know where you are and where you want to go, it's time to identify your milestones along the way.

6. What do you need to do to reach your first milestone?

Do you need to acquire certain pedagogical qualifications, gain international experience or publish in certain journals?

7. Are there alternative paths to your final destination and milestones?

Which way seems the most enjoyable, interesting or rewarding?

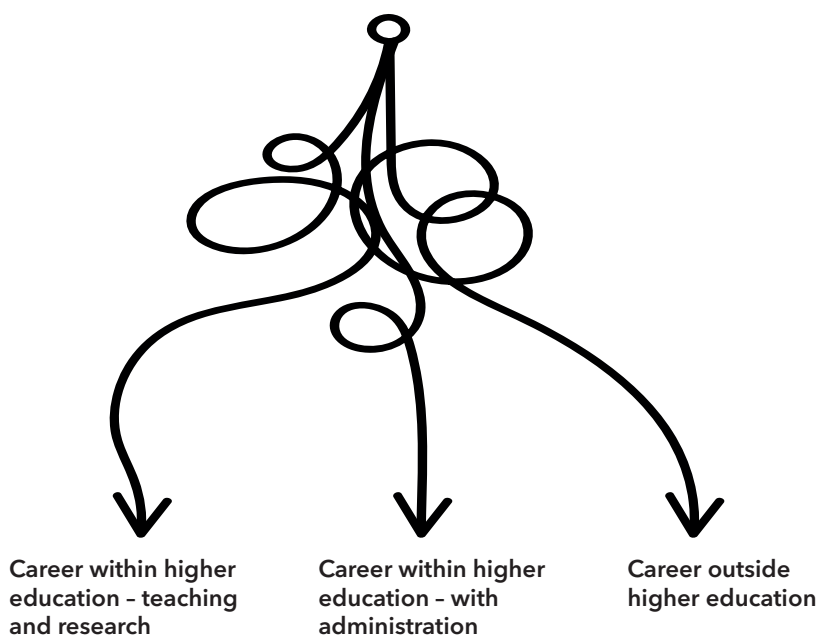
If your long-term plan is difficult to put down on paper, focus on identifying your first milestone and what you need to do to reach it.

Get yourself a map



Get yourself a map

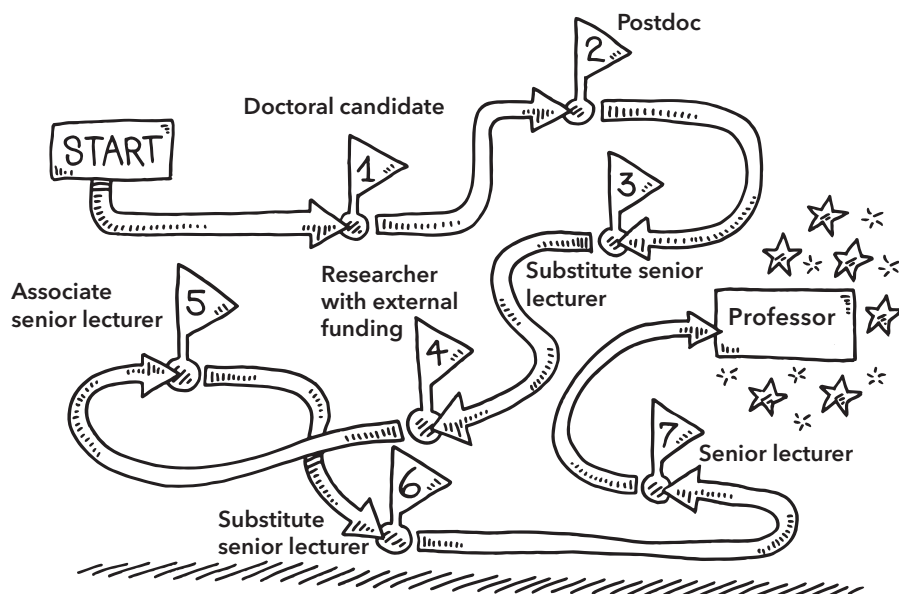
Once you have formulated your goals, you need to orient yourself. The academic world is complex and full of obstacles. But, as you know, knowledge is power, so you need to get a map of the different paths you can take.



For many people who picture themselves in an academic career, the only and obvious choice is a professional life spent entirely within higher education, focusing on teaching and research. But when drawing your map, it is well worth including other options and possibilities. Not because you might choose them, but because it is important to have as complete a picture as possible.

As well as the traditional academic career, there is potential to use your academic knowledge and skills both within and outside the world of higher education. Many important senior functions within university administration are run successfully by PhD qualified staff with extensive knowledge of higher education and research.

To get an idea of how an academic career focused on research and education might look, it may be best to start with an overview.



Following the autonomy reform in 2011, each higher education institution can decide itself what positions it will have in addition to the posts of senior lecturer and professor. This makes the map a little more complicated, as the positions that exist can vary from institution to institution. The content of one and the same position can also vary. This means that in addition to your overview map, you will also need a map of the local area or the institution's positions.

The most common positions in careers in higher education:

Doctoral candidate (*doktorand*)

This is a person who has been admitted to a PhD programme. There were approximately 17,000 doctoral candidates in Sweden in autumn 2019, but some of these were not very active. 58 per cent of doctoral candidate positions were full-time posts. Two thirds of doctoral candidates were employed as doctoral candidates. Seven per cent supported themselves through scholarships. Scholarships are only permitted as a means of support for doctoral studies for one of four years.

Postdoctoral fellow (*postdoktor*)

A postdoctoral appointment is often the first step after a doctoral qualification; it is intended to give the opportunity to qualify for a continued career. It is often recommended that postdoctoral appointments be held at a different higher education institution or faculty than the one at which the doctoral candidates defended their thesis. A postdoc at a foreign university or research institute also often means the opportunity to build a broad and important network of contacts. At Swedish higher education institutions, postdocs are usually in the form of fixed-term employment regulated by a collective agreement, but they also exist as fixed-term positions in accordance with the Employment Protection Act or as a postdoctoral scholarship. A postdoctoral fellow mainly conducts research, but a certain amount of teaching can also be included. The Swedish Research Council, Vetenskapsrådet, finances a number of international overseas postdocs. The United States is the most common destination.

Adjunct lecturer (*adjunkt*)

Adjunct lecturer is an unregulated title. An adjunct lecturer works primarily with teaching and does not usually have a doctorate. Adjunct lecturers often combine their academic knowledge with professional knowledge and are found most commonly in vocational education. Adjunct lecturers with PhD qualifications seem to be more common nowadays.

Senior adjunct lecturer (*senior adjunkt/förste adjunkt*)

At some higher education institutions, it is possible for adjunct lecturers to be promoted to senior adjunct lecturer. Promotion usually requires the demonstration of extensive pedagogical skills and the implementation of pedagogical development work at a high level.

Researcher (*forskare*)

Researcher is an unregulated title; a university is free to use the title as it wishes. This means that there can be large differences in what a job as a researcher involves. Usually, independent research or work in a research group is a major part of the job. It is also common for different universities to have special categories of researchers called senior researchers.

Associate senior lecturer (*biträdande lektor*)

Associate senior lecturer is a fixed-term employment position regulated in the Higher Education Ordinance which gives the right to review for permanent employment after a period of 4-6 years. It is up to each hig-

her education institution to decide what assessment criteria are to apply for promotion to senior lecturer. These conditions must be decided at the commencement of the employment. Associate senior lecturers spend most of their time on research, but a certain amount of teaching may occur. The conditions can vary between different higher education institutions.

Senior lecturer (*lektor*)

A senior lectureship is a teaching and research position that is regulated in the Higher Education Act and Higher Education Ordinance as well as an appointments procedure for teachers. Eligibility for a senior lecturer position requires proven teaching competence and a completed doctorate or other scientific/artistic skills or other professional skills that are of relevance for the position. This means that a higher education institution has great freedom to decide what assessment criteria it will apply, but in practice most senior lecturers have a PhD qualification.

Docent (*docent*)

Docent, usually the equivalent of a reader in the UK or an associate professor in the USA, is a title that demonstrates acquired competence and is used by most higher education institutions, but it is not an employment position. Becoming a docent requires an application to the higher education institution. The assessment criteria applied may vary between institutions.

Distinguished university teacher (*excellent lärare*)

Distinguished university teacher is a title awarded by some higher education institutions to show broad pedagogical competence. It is normally a title that is attainable for all teachers.

Professor (*professor*)

Employment as a professor is the highest position you can have as a teacher. Eligibility for employment as a professor requires proven scientific and teaching skills or artistic and pedagogical competence. Each higher education institution has great freedom to decide what assessment criteria it will apply, but the assessment of teaching skills must be given the same degree of focus as scientific or artistic competence.

Plenty of other titles

There are many other titles that can be found at a higher education institution, including research engineer, research assistant, visiting researcher and visiting professor.

Appointments procedure for teachers – an important part of your map

Every higher education institution in the state sector is obliged to have an appointments procedure for teachers. Your higher education institution's appointments procedure is a regulatory framework that determines the teaching employment positions that exist at the institution. It also regulates eligibility requirements, assessment criteria and recruitment methods, and it clarifies any possibility or right to promotion. The appointments procedure differs from institution to institution, which means that both titles and the work content of positions may differ.

Research positions are not normally included in the appointments procedure for teachers, and they are not usually covered by the local working time agreement for teachers. Instead, in terms of employment law, researchers are equated with technical administrative staff with regard to working hours. The content of the employment is seldom regulated. Employees who are not teachers are not allowed to set examinations and award results.

The map and the reality - career structure

In theory, the conventional academic career may look linear and straightforward. You start with a doctorate, go on to do a postdoc, (preferably abroad), continue with an associate senior lectureship, after which you are promoted to senior lecturer, become a docent and then a professor.

But as you will have understood, the reality is more complicated. In addition, becoming a professor is not the only goal of an academic career. An academic career looks different depending on both discipline and institution. It is also often full of gaps and precarious employment. You may sometimes come to a dead end and have to turn back on part of the way you came.

For people doing a doctorate in the humanities, there is not much external research funding, so if you wish to stay in academia, you are to a large extent faced with the option of applying for the relatively few jobs that are advertised at higher education institutions. If you are doing a doctorate in medicine, you will more or less be expected to apply for external funding, even in cases where you are employed. The same applies in the field of engineering and technology. What applies at different institutions and in different subjects varies greatly; if you want to have an academic career, you need to get an idea of how things look in your particular field. Preferably as early as possible.

To be able to identify places where the map and reality do not match and to find strategies/trade-offs to deal with these, it is important to listen to and talk to people about their experiences.

The map for each higher education institution can be found in its appointment procedures, but the problem is that that map is seldom complete. It may, for example, include no research positions even though these are common in reality. In practice, many jobs are therefore outside the academic career path structure.



To be able to work with research is – in my opinion – incredibly stimulating. Having an academic career in the sense of being able to do research requires curiosity, perseverance and a lot of work, as well as a willingness to take criticism in order to improve. Against this background, my advice is to choose tasks based on desire and what seems enjoyable. If your gut feeling says no, don't do it. Do not chase every ball, because if your desire lies there, other professions are more suitable. Collaborate, and don't be too accepting when all the demands pile up. Since probably no one else will take care of your well-being, you have to take that responsibility yourself.

Marianne Döös
Professor Emerita of Pedagogical Studies

Below you can see examples from Chalmers University of Technology and Linköping University.

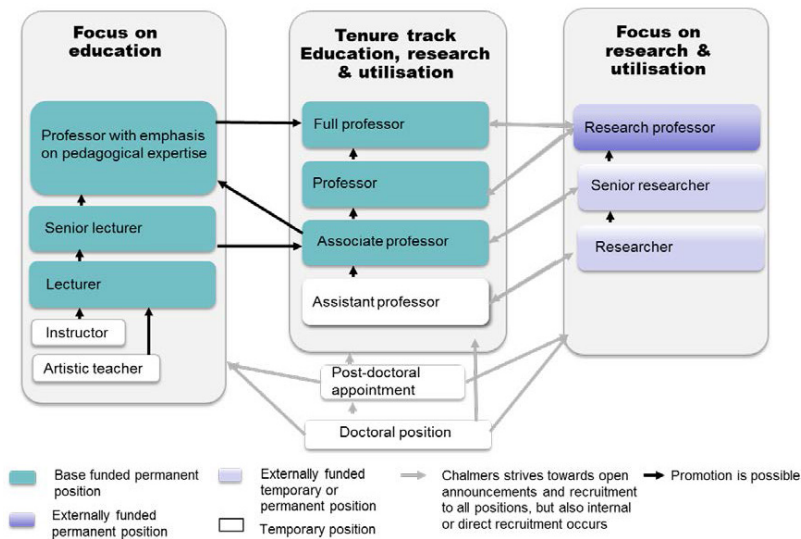


Figure 1: Chalmers' academic career structure (primary paths).

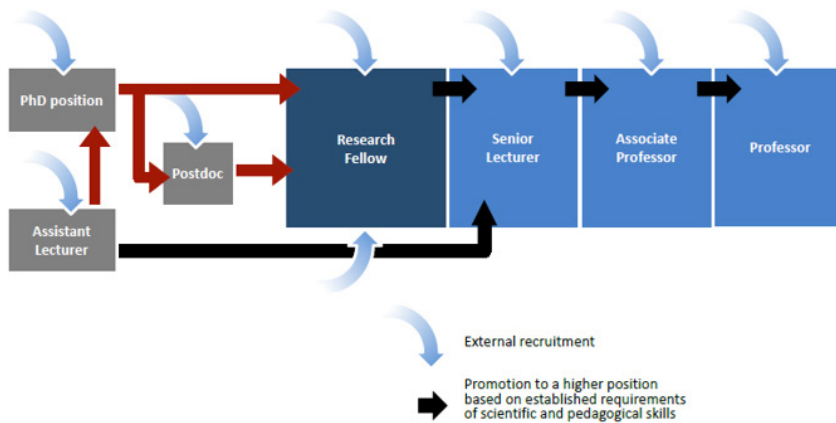


Figure 2: Example from Linköping University.

As you can see, there are three different parallel career paths at Chalmers, where one is a classic academic career, one focuses on education and one focuses on utilization. At Linköping University, there are different paths into a career, one of which is called junior university lecturer. This is an example of a position that is not common at other higher education institutions.

If you want to have a career in academia, it is vital that you get a map of how the academic career path looks at your institution or the institution you wish to work at. But a schematic overview is not enough. You also need to ask around to get an overview of how well the map corresponds to reality. A good way to do this is to get involved in the local SULF association or the SULF Doctoral Candidate Association.

How you are employed matters

There are two main forms of employment, permanent or fixed term. Among research and teaching staff at higher education institutions, as many as 29 per cent are in fixed-term employment, (this figure excludes doctoral candidates), which means that it is likely that you will have one or two fixed-term contracts during your career in higher education.

Knowing the type of employment you have and what it entitles you to can make a big difference.

Permanent employment

Permanent employment refers to a position where there is no agreed end date for the employment. Permanent employment lasts until you or the employer terminates the contract. Permanent employment is the main rule in Swedish labour and employment law.

Fixed-term employment

Fixed-term employment is an exception to the main rule that employment is permanent. These exceptions are regulated by law, ordinances or collective agreements. In cases of fixed-term employment, the employee and the employer have agreed on the end date of the contract from the outset.

Common grounds for fixed-term employment in legislation and collective agreements

Special fixed-term employment

The grounds for this form of fixed-term employment are set out in Clause 1 of Section 5 of the Employment Protection Act. If you are employed with reference to these grounds, your employment contract will contain the terms special fixed-term employment, (särskild visstidsanställning) SÄVA or LAS 5:1.

No special conditions are required for the employer to be allowed to use this form of fixed-term employment. It can be used for a maximum of two years over a five-year period. If an employee is employed with reference to general fixed-term employment by the same employer for more than two years during a five-year period, the employment becomes a permanent position.

Substitute employment

The grounds for this form of fixed-term employment are set out in Clause 2 of Section 5 of the Employment Protection Act. If you are employed with reference to these grounds, your employment contract will contain the terms substitute employment, (vikariat), LAS 5:2, or perhaps pending appointment. For the employer to be able to use this form of fixed-term employment, a permanent employee must be on temporary leave from work.

The employer is allowed to use this form of fixed-term employment when a position is in the process of being filled. Substitute employment can be used for a maximum of two years over a five-year period. If an employee is employed with reference to substitute employment by the same employer for more than two years during a five-year period, the employment becomes a permanent position.

Doctoral candidate

The grounds for this form of fixed-term employment are to be found in Chapter 5, Section 7 of the Higher Education Ordinance. Only people who are being admitted to or have already been admitted to a programme of doctoral studies at a higher education institution may be employed as doctoral candidates.

You may normally be employed as a doctoral candidate for a maximum of eight years. However, the total employment period may not be longer than the equivalent of full-time doctoral studies, which is four years upon admission to the doctorate programme and two years upon admission to the licentiate degree programme.

Associate senior lecturer

The grounds for this form of fixed-term employment are set out in Chapter 4, Section 12a of the Higher Education Ordinance, with a description of the qualification criteria in Paragraph 4a of the Ordinance. Associate senior lecturers devote most of their time to research, but some teaching may occur.

You can be employed as an associate senior lecturer for 4-6 years. You then have a right to be assessed for promotion to a permanent position as senior lecturer.

Adjunct professor

The grounds for this form of fixed-term employment are to be found in Chapter 4, Section 11 of the Higher Education Ordinance. This is a part-time position for employees whose primary employment is outside the higher education sector. The duration of the position may not exceed twelve years.

Adjunct teacher under a collective agreement

The grounds for this form of fixed-term employment are regulated by collective agreement and found in agreements on the fixed-term employment of adjunct teachers. It is a part-time position and limited to employees whose primary employment is outside the university and higher education sector.

Visiting professor

The grounds for this form of fixed-term employment are to be found in Chapter 4, Section 12 of the Higher Education Ordinance. These positions are for employees whose primary employment is at another Swedish or foreign higher education institution. The duration of the position may not exceed five years.

Postdoctoral fellow

The grounds for this form of fixed-term employment are regulated by collective agreement and found in agreements on the fixed-term employment of postdoctoral fellows. If you are employed with reference to these grounds, your employment contract will contain the terms postdoctoral fellow (KA Postdoktor) or Central KA. These positions are full-time and normally for a period of two years, but they can be extended under certain circumstances. The work consists mainly of research.

Scholarships

Unfortunately, various forms of scholarship are common in the higher education sector. They exist for doctoral candidates, postdoctoral fellows and researchers, to name just a few of the titles given to scholarship holders. Both education grants and scholarships mean that the recipient does not have an employment relationship with the institution. This has a major impact with regard to insurance, social insurances, pensions and eligibility to receive unemployment insurance.

Accumulation of fixed-term employment positions

An academic career requires mobility, and there are many benefits to be gained by building networks and exploring different academic cultures at different Swedish and international universities. There is therefore a need for fixed-term positions.

Unfortunately, there is also a widespread abuse of fixed-term employment within higher education. It is not uncommon for a newly qualified PhD graduate to have between ten and fifteen years of fixed-term employment ahead of them before there is a possibility of permanent employment. For the individual, this can lead to a feeling of insecurity and create difficulties for obtaining a mortgage, establishing stable circumstances for starting a family and planning for the future.

Accumulating back-to-back fixed-term positions is not something that the management of higher education institutions encourages, but it is still a major problem within academia. SULF advocates the creation of more associate senior lectureships to enable the acquisition of skills and experience and then assessment for permanent employment.



Network! If you want to get ahead, you must work actively to communicate with others in your research community and across disciplinary boundaries. Also, communicate with other stakeholders in society. This will enable you to learn from each other and help each other. Participate in conferences, symposia, networks - where you learn a lot in a short time.

Gordana Dodig Crnkovic
Professor of Computer Science and Interaction Design



Learn properly what the organisation looks like where you work. It is difficult to build a good career in an organisation where you do not know at all how things work. Where does the money come from? Where are the decisions made? And so on... I have often been amazed at how little teachers and researchers within higher education know about how their institution and higher education in general work organisationally. How can you then be able to make strategic decisions about your own career?

Kerstin Rydbeck
Professor of Library and Information Studies



My best advice is to dare to believe that you can contribute essential knowledge, dare to do what you think is right and do not let go of your conviction that research can contribute to change for those who need it most.

Magnus Tideman
Professor of Disability Studies

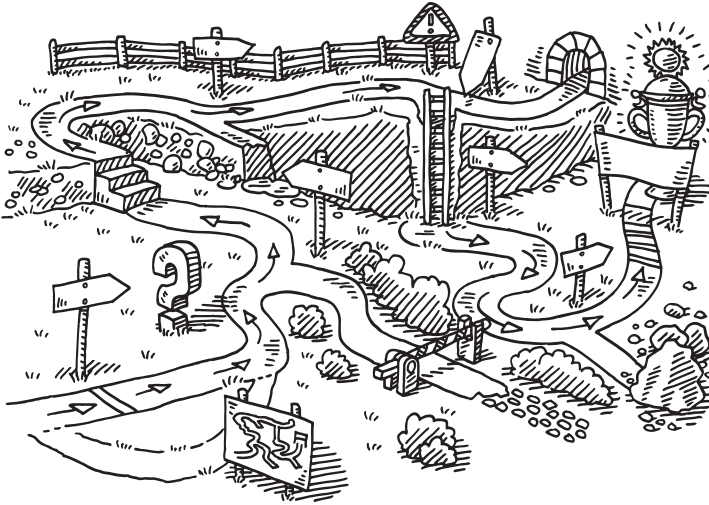
Check your route



Check your route

A good idea for anyone setting out on a career expedition is to conduct a risk analysis. The purpose of a risk analysis is to obtain as much information as possible in order to be able to calculate risks in the short and long term. What kind of unpleasant obstacles and events can I run into and what consequences could they have? It is a matter of identifying different risks in order to either be able to eliminate them even before they arise or at least have a plan of what to do if something goes wrong.

Identify the different risks that exist or the threats and obstacles that could arise. It is good to do this as early as possible and then continuously during your journey when you come to different milestones, such as new qualifications or moving to a new job or position.



There are various kinds of risk. Human risks include you or someone you depend on falling ill, being injured or becoming unemployed. Other human risks that exist within higher education, unfortunately, are poor collaboration within working groups and poor relationships with supervisors. Risks can also be of an organisational nature, involving such things as reorganisations, workload, financing or the physical work environment. A risk analysis should be conducted individually and updated regularly.

Estimate the likelihood that the risk will occur. When it comes to working in higher education, there is generally a low probability that the physical work environment will lead to an occupational injury, even though there are exceptions. If you are a polar researcher who is going on a demanding expedition to the Arctic, the likelihood of physical injury is probably greater than if you are a historian who spends most of your time at the Royal Library. On the other hand, there is generally a higher risk that the workload for the latter will lead to high psychosocial stress levels. Many of you reading this will unfortunately also experience stress due to uncertainties regarding research funding or insufficient course budgets.

Estimate the consequences of the risk if it occurs. The consequences can be great for doctoral candidates who have problems in their relationships with their supervisors, for teachers who cannot handle increasing demands from their students or for researchers who do not get their applications for research funding approved. In the worst case, this may mean an uncompleted thesis, sick leave or unemployment without compensation, or the loss of your residence permit.

The importance of building networks

A good piece of advice is to try to conduct some of your doctoral studies at a foreign university. The scope for this is different in different disciplines, but if you have a good supervisor that you trust, you can ask for advice on where you can go. Hopefully, your supervisor already has a wide network of contacts with researchers both in Sweden and abroad.

And once you have completed your doctorate, you may want to continue your academic career by travelling again, and there are greater opportunities to apply for a postdoc abroad. Because it is often outside Sweden, or perhaps even outside Europe, you can find groups and institutions that can give you the new knowledge that will make your competence valuable so that you get the academic job that you want. But remember not to choose exactly the same research area in which you have already qualified. It is good if you already understand some of the research area you are going to work in, but not all. A rule of thumb could be that half should be new and half should be familiar already.

If you wish to pursue an academic career after your postdoc, it is an advantage if you already know something about the knowledge and skills required to obtain the type of position you are interested in, perhaps as an associate senior lecturer or senior lecturer. What is required varies. In Sweden, it is unfortunately the case that employers often look for a new employee who fits in with the way the department already works, and not the candidate that is the most innovative. Anyone who has been too independent may therefore find it difficult to get a job there, even if they come in first, second or third place in expert assessments. If, on the other hand, you have maintained your connection to an institution that offers a more permanent position during your postdoc periods, it is often easier to get one. This is the case in Sweden.



Find out what you need, (qualifications and skills), in order to be able to climb the academic career ladder.
Minna Hakkarainen
Professor of Fibre and Polymer Technology

In the United States, for example, things are different. There, they more often look for new teachers and researchers with their own competence who, during their period as tenure track assistant professor, will be able to (1) build up their own NEW business (2) acquire external funds to run it (3) teach students in undergraduate education and (4) attract doctoral candidates and build a new research group. If the new tenure track assistant professor succeeds in this, he/she will be given tenure, i.e. a permanent job that is often, (depending on the university you work at), much more secure than the jobs available in Sweden.

Support from your institution

It has become increasingly common for higher education institutions, especially large universities, to invest in career support for doctoral candidates, postdoctoral fellows and younger researchers. The range of support services offered varies, so explore what is on offer at your institution.



Don't wait for mentors to promote you. Play an active part yourself in running networks, workshops etc about the topics that interest you. Set the scientific agenda yourself.
Gudrun Dahl
Professor of Social Anthropology

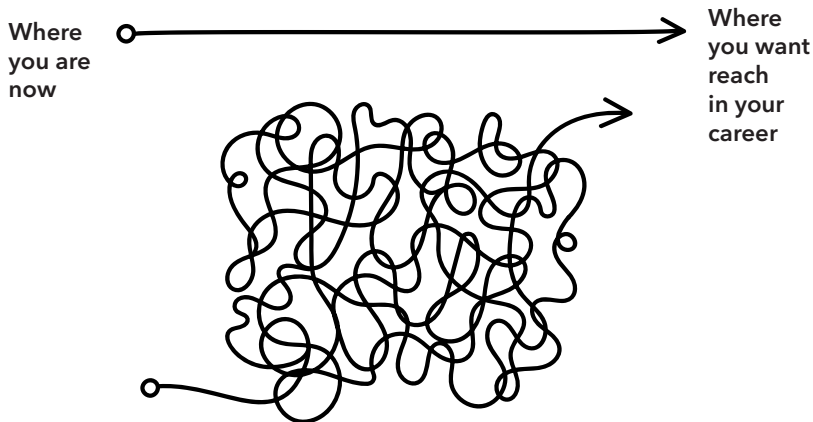
When the expedition is under way



When the expedition is under way

Once your expedition is in full swing, everyday life will soon dominate your focus, which is completely understandable. Everything from staff meetings to the next deadline, in combination with picking up children after school and thinking about how to fit everything in takes up your time, energy and commitment. However, it may be worthwhile to take time, perhaps every five years or so, to reflect on your professional life, your career and review where you are and where you are going.

We sometimes have a tendency to see the future and our planned career as some kind of straight line.



In reality, a career usually looks messier and in all probability contains false starts, some tangents and perhaps the occasional dead end. So leave room to welcome the unplanned and unexpected. Have courage and confidence that you will find the path that works for you.

It is also likely that the goals and milestones you identify the first time you think about your career will change as time goes by. Deeper understanding and knowledge of the academic world might be one reason, new or re-prioritized life goals might be another.

That being said, there is one crucial thing we absolutely must add. The resources, that is, you, should be sufficient to take you all the way.

Work is limitless, and we don't think that there are many other unions whose members work as much for free and where so many want to continue working well beyond normal retirement age. That is fantastic. But at the same time, we know that many people suffer from an increasing workload; when work tends to be your everything, it's difficult to say no. For your own sake, you need to set boundaries, be realistic about what is feasible and not accept absolutely anything. And look after yourself.

The toughest challenge is managing resources. Academic work is mostly unstructured, and it is difficult to calculate how long things will take. Many choose the solution "work constantly". That is a bad solution, often leading to poor quality work that then needs to be redone.

There will never be enough time. Any number of things will remain undone. This is what it is like to have a job with the potential to contribute to changing the world. You will have little demons looking over your shoulder, telling you to do a little more, just a little more. You can learn to live with this by letting the demons wait; by saying "Not now, but we will devote some time to it tomorrow".

Do what you have already promised before you take on more. It sounds better to say "I need to complete what I am already working on" than to say "I don't have time". This way, you can show your interest without taking on work that you will be unable to do in a reasonable amount of time.

Often, a walk can be more productive than being stuck at your desk. And by spending time with friends and family, you can both replenish reserves and provide perspective on what is important. Balance is vital, so that you do not give up in bad times or go to extremes when things are going well. And don't forget to celebrate your successes!

There may come a time when you need to abort the expedition completely, to pack up and go home, for example when there is danger to life and limb. If things have gone too far, and there is no decent job in sight, or if applying for money over and over again has worn you down, well, then it may just be time to give up.

Our neighbours in Norway have long experience of mountains, sea and bad weather. As a result, there are official mountain common sense. The rules include things like listening to experienced mountain people, using a map and compass and never going alone. Rule Number 8 reads Vend i tide, det er ingen skam å snu, (Turn in time, there is no shame in turning around).

And sometimes we have wished that more people had turned in time and taken a good job outside higher education. As long as there are so many people prepared to do anything to stay at an institution, it is difficult to get employers to work seriously to implement improvements, review forms of employment and create genuine career paths.



It pays to be rigid, i.e. persevere and stick with it! Drill down into the subject you have chosen and don't get distracted by shiny stuff.

Siv Fischbein
Professor Emerita of Special Needs Education



Don't be obsessed with things that look like they will improve your CV. Devote yourself to your research and your academic work because you think it feels important, enjoyable and exciting. If you do this, you will feel better and be a better colleague. Do not engage in unnecessary competition. Instead, do the vital tasks that society and citizens expect of us/you without being distracted by constantly looking here and there.

Lars Svedberg
Post Retirement Professor of Social Work



My best advice? Try to find a good balance between stubbornly going your own way and being receptive to the advice of others. Those who constantly have their finger in the air to check how the wind is blowing have less power to develop their own path, and those who never look up can discover that all the important conversations take place somewhere else.

Claes-Fredrik Helgesson
Director, Centre for Integrated Research on Culture and Society

Dealing with storms and other unexpected events



Storms and other unexpected events

You have probably heard or noticed yourself that it can be difficult to survive in the academic world. And for those who embark on this journey, the risk is quite high that there will be occasional storms and high waves. That is one of the reasons why it is so important to plan your trip. Because even if it doesn't turn out as you imagined, you at least have something to deviate from or strive back towards. Knowing that things can get tough sometimes, and that this applies to many more than just you, may make it a little easier to deal with adversity.

When the stress increases and the battle for resources intensifies, you need a disaster kit. This is where relationships with friends and colleagues come in again. If you have built strong bonds when things were calm, they will hold firmer now. And if you became a member of the union before you got into trouble, there is a lot we can do for you now. Because you don't take out home insurance when your house is already in flame.

Safety demonstrations on airplanes usually tell you to put on your own oxygen mask before helping the person next to you. And that applies equally to the world of academia. You need to look after yourself. Just as academia is limitless, so is the amount of work you can do.



Don't lose sight of (professional) enjoyment!
Jan Anward
Professor Emeritus of Language and Culture

Professional freedom for most people means the freedom to work as much and as long as you wish. There is no shortage of work, but there is a shortage of money. Unfortunately, you are likely to experience that first-hand.

Knowing what the academic landscape looks like makes it easier not to blame yourself for failure to get a job or an external research grant. Approximately one third of the research and teaching staff at Swedish higher education institutions have fixed-term employment, not including doctoral candidates in the number, and only about one seventh of the applications received by the Swedish Research Council, the country's largest funder of research, are successful. This means that you will need to practise how to fail, and then fail again. But still persevere.

We cannot stress enough the importance of having good people around you. What that looks like will vary depending on your expedition. For some, it will mean being part of a research group, while for others having a good network is the key.

Building networks and making friends is not something you can do on a coffee break. Relationships that will withstand storms need to be built in calm weather, long before they are needed. Make sure you nurture your friendships from the start and work hard to give them the attention they deserve. Then your journey and theirs will be so much more creative and enjoyable. And remember – it's the things that are fun that are the easiest to be good at.

One of the great things about academia is that it knows no bounds. Colleagues can and should be found at your own institution, at other institutions in Sweden and/or all over the world. Academia provides unique opportunities for knowledge exchange and understanding of other cultures that exist in few other jobs. And since research and higher education are long term, there are good opportunities for lifelong friendships.

And, whatever you do, do not forget to join the union from the start, even if you do not think you will need us.

Safety equipment

Life jacket and safety ropes

- membership of a trade union organisation, preferably SULF
- membership of an unemployment insurance fund (a-kassa), preferably Akademikernas a-kassa

Survival suit and parachute

- income insurance through your union membership

First aid kit, containing everything from plasters to slings

- a broad social network made up of close friends, acquaintances and colleagues who can assist you with information, advice and support in different situations

Alarm

- access through your union to knowledge about reasonable expectations and what to do if you are asked to work under unreasonable working conditions or unnecessarily precarious circumstances.

Tips: Five tips for a less stormy expedition

1. Avoid romance in the workplace

Love and romance in the workplace pose an overwhelming risk of work environment problems, conflicts and, in the worst case, accusations of sexual harassment. If the relationship is also with a subordinate, you run the risk of getting into a difficult situation if the relationship ends unhappily. Our recommendation is to build good, close relationships with colleagues but to find love elsewhere if possible.

2. Avoid working for free

As a university teacher and researcher, you have annual working hours and a work task plan that describes how your working hours are to be allocated. Work outside the scope of the plan must be ordered as overtime, and if you do this work without signalling to the employer that there is not enough time allocated, you risk making a rod for your own back. If you produce high-quality teaching and research using your free time this year, you will be expected to do the same in the future.

3. Focus on long-term survival — look after yourself first and foremost

It is your mission to create your own well-being, health and happiness, and to ensure that the right conditions exist to achieve them. If you choose repeatedly to sacrifice your well-being for the needs of colleagues or students, you may end up paying a high price. It's fine to help and support others, but only when you have taken care of yourself.

4. Be willing to be proactive — move on if you're not happy

Frustration over work tasks, precarious employment, shortcomings in the work environment, lack of opportunities for promotion or salary development — there are many reasons people may not be happy in the workplace. If you have found that there is no prospect of change, it is time to consider a change of workplace, sector or perhaps even country.

5. Remember that academia is an employer

Academia is full of committed and dedicated people, but your higher education institution is also an employer, with obligations and loyalties that are not just about science or knowledge development. Make sure that promises about employment, working conditions and other things are put in writing, and get clarity on what conditions apply before you accept assignments.

Time for a new stage on your journey



Time for the next stage?

Applying for a job in higher education often takes a long time and can seem complicated and cumbersome. For many positions, expert review is required, especially if you are looking for a job as a senior lecturer or professor. At the same time as the procedure for academic positions is slow and formal, many posts are filled outside the meritocratic system. Many teachers enter through the back door after years of substituting or other fixed-term employment.

Although one might think it is reasonable for those who have spent years and years in fixed-term employment eventually to be granted a permanent position, there are major problems when recruitment procedures are not based on competence. In addition to the fact that quality suffers, it makes things difficult for those who want to leverage their formal competence or for those who come from outside and are not known at the institution. It is also well known that women benefit from formal appointments processes. This is an important factor in higher education, where in 2019 only a quarter of professorships were held by women.

Writing an academic CV

Writing a CV can be quite tricky. The traditions differ between different disciplines, while higher education institutions increasingly require that applicants upload a wide range of different documents when applying for a job and sometimes also fill in various forms that do not always feel completely relevant. So the first thing to think about is what is considered important in your discipline and what the different universities want.

That said, there are some key things to bear in mind when applying for almost any job in higher education. You need up-to-date lists of the following:

- Your publications, (arranged in the way that is accepted practice in your subject).
- Any teaching you have done (courses, numbers of students, duration). Note that this is not the same as a list of your educational achievements (see below).
- Your employment history (including tasks and responsibilities you have had and any special assignments, including leadership roles).

Make a habit of updating these lists as soon as there is any change, for example if you get a special assignment or if a fixed-term position ends and another begins. It is up to you yourself to include all your relevant qualifications and experience.

Teaching portfolio

It is becoming increasingly common for higher education institutions to request a teaching portfolio when employing university teachers. It is also a prerequisite for promotion to a senior adjunct lectureship. A teaching portfolio is a collection of various documents, sometimes with attachments and appendices. The purpose is for you to be able to show that you have a well-thought-out teaching methodology and to prove your teaching qualifications systematically. Therefore, it is important that you show in every part of the portfolio, which is not just a list, that you are as systematic and reflective in your teaching as you are in your scientific work. An unblemished success story will not impress. You need to show that you have developed in all parts of your teaching by reflecting and trying new ways. The portfolio can be structured in different ways, and each higher education institution has its own template.

The following are usually required in a teaching portfolio:

- A description of your basic teaching philosophy. It is important that this comes across as thoughtful and personal, not just a collection of educational buzzwords.
- Your thoughts on how you work systematically to develop your teaching, with examples of what you have done. This should be linked to your basic pedagogical philosophy so that you can justify why you choose to work in a certain way. It is important that you reflect on your teaching here, by showing that you have learned from mistakes and have developed.
- Some reflection on how you contribute to quality development in the organization by placing your teaching in a larger context, including any work with leadership assignments.
- Up-to-date lists of all your teaching assignments, (both within and outside higher education institutions), teaching-related competence development, course materials and textbooks you have written.



Professor Susanna Hedenborg

Employed by
Malmö University

Academic Discipline/Fields
Arts and humanities
Social sciences, journalism and information

Area of specialisation

Sport sciences, History, Economic history, Sport history, Gender and History of childhood

Research interests

Sport and gender, social class, ethnicity, sexuality, Children and youth sport, Equestrian sport

Distinctions and Awards

Lärkan 2012 (the Best Swedish textbook for the books: Hedenborg, S (Långström, S, Ededal, I, Ader, W), Historia 1b, Då, nu, sedan, Studentlitteratur, 2012. (textbook); Hedenborg, S (Långström, S, Ededal, I, Ader, W), Historia 1, Då, nu, sedan, Studentlitteratur, 2010, 2011. (textbook).

SVIF (Society for Swedish Sports History) 2014, for comprehensive and in-depth studies of the historical development of horse racing and equestrian sports in Sweden combined with extensive international research cooperation.

Guldbladet, A prize for best communication of research, 2014

SCIF (Swedish Sport Research Award) 2015

Languages

English, French, Swedish

Doctorate

1997: History of childhood

PostDoc qualification, e.g. Habilitation

2004: Historical demography and History of childhood

Short CV/Education and training

1991 Baccalaureate degree: Social anthropology, Stockholm University

1992 Baccalaureate degree: Economic history, Stockholm University

1997 PhD: Economic history (History of childhood)

2002-2007 Postdoctoral Research Fellow in economic history, Uppsala University

2004 Associate professor, Uppsala University

2009 Full professor in Sport studies, Malmö University

2012-2018 Vice dean of the Faculty Education and society, Malmö University

Selected publications

Hedenborg, S & Larneby, M, *Skilda världar - Unga i och om framtidens föreningsidrott*, Stockholm: Riksidrottsförbundet, 2016

Hedenborg, Susanna, Lis Hartel - an extraordinary equestrian, *Sport in society* 2016, DOI: 10.1080/17430437.2016.1175137

Hedenborg, Susanna, Gender and sports within the Equine Sector : A comparative perspective, *The International journal of the history of sport*;4, 551-564, Taylor & Francis, 2015

Hedenborg, S & Hellborg, AM, "The rocker and the heroine. Gendered media representations of equestrian sport at the 2012 Olympics", *Sport in society*, 2013.

Hedenborg, Susanna, "The Olympic Games in London from a Swedish media perspective" *International Journal of the History of Sport*;7, 789-804, Taylor & Francis, 2013.

Hedenborg, S & Pfister, G, "Écuyères and "doing gender". Presenting femininity in a male domain. Female circus riders 1800-1920", *Scandinavian sport studies forum*, 2012, vol 3, 25-47.

Hedenborg, S & Hedenborg-White, M, "Changes and variations in patterns of gender relations in equestrian sports during the second half of the twentieth century", *Sport in Society*, 2012:3, 302-319.

Hedenborg, S, "Unknown soldiers and very pretty ladies. Challenges to the social order of sports in Post-War Sweden", *Sport in history*, 2009:4.

Hedenborg, S, "La petite enfance en Suède sous Karl Johan", *Revue d'Histoire Nordique* 6-7, 2008.

Hedenborg, S, "Trainers of racehorses in 20th century Sweden. Small business and gender", in *ASSH (Australian Society for sports history)*, (2008).

Hedenborg, S, "Female Jockeys in Swedish Horse Racing 1890-2000. From Minority to Majority", *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 2007: 4.

Hedenborg, S, "To breastfeed another woman's child: wet-nursing in Stockholm, 1777-1937", in *Continuity and change* 16 (3) 2001, 399-442.

Hedenborg, S, "The world is full of sorrow: Infant mortality in Stockholm, 1754-1850", *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, vol XLVIII, no: 1, 2000, s 64-80.

[Complete list of publications](#)

Selected projects

The popular horse

The purpose of the project was to explore gender and social class relations in the history of equestrian sports in Sweden. Financed by the Swedish research council.

Elite sport and women - an (I'm)possible equation?

The purpose of this study is to explore women's and men's economic conditions in elite sport. Financed by Swedish National Centre for Research in Sports.

The future of children and youth sport

Many young people drop out of sport and traditional sport organizations are challenged. The purpose of this project is to study young people's ideas of what sport could include in the future. Financed by the Swedish Sport Confederation.

Membership in scientific bodies/juries

President of Centrum för idrottsforskning (Swedish Research council of sport science, 2018-)

Member of the scientific board, ECSS (since 2014)

Congress President ECSS, 2015

Member of the Board of Svensk hästforskning (Swedish Equestrian Research)

Member of Committee for Historical studies, Vetenskapsrådet (Swedish Research Council), 2012-2014

Member of Committee for Infrastructure, Vetenskapsrådet (Swedish Research Council), since 2014

Member of the Board of Centrum för idrottsforskning (Swedish National Centre for Research in Sports), since 2012

Committee for Cultural studies, (Beredningsgrupp för KulRAM), Vetenskapsrådet (Swedish Research Council), 2009-2010

Elektorsförsamlingen Vetenskapsrådet (Swedish Research Council), 2009

Additional qualifications

Vice dean of the Faculty Education and society, Malmö University, since 2012

Senior Lecturer in Leisure Studies, 2006-2009, Malmö University

Administrative director of "Svenska historiedagarna", 1998-1999

Senior Lecturer in History, Linköping University, 1998-1999

Head of studies, Department of Economic History, Stockholm University, 1999-2001

International work: In 2001 and 2004 Hedenborg gave lectures in Moscow at RGGU. During 2003 Hedenborg worked as a guest senior lecturer at Toulouse University (Mirail). Hedenborg worked at Toulouse University as a guest senior lecturer during spring semester 2004 and 2005 too. During 2008 Hedenborg worked as a guest senior lecturer in University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. In 2010 Hedenborg conducted research at the British Library, London. In 2011 Hedenborg spent one month as a guest lecturer at Griffith University, Australia, and has taught several times in Trondheim (NTNU), Norwegian School of Sport science 2013, 2014, 2017 and at the Summer School for PhD students at Copenhagen University 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015 and an EU-program for master students in Kosovo (2012-2014).

Supervisor for (examination year): Johanna Sköld (PhD); Stockholm University (2006); Karin Ågren (PhD); Uppsala University (2007); Kalle Jonasson, Malmö University (2013); David Cardell (Licentiate degree), Malmö University (2009); Jonas Tiboroha, Malmö University/University of Dar Es Salaam (2014); Devota Marwa, Malmö University/University of Dar Es Salaam (2014); Julia Rönnbäck, Malmö University (2015); Anna Maria Hellborg (2019); Assistant supervisor Per Borg (PhD), Stockholm University (2004); Solveig Hollari (Licentiate degree), Stockholm University (2000), Torun Mattsson, Malmö University (2016), Gabriella Thorell, Karlstad University (2017).

Editorial/advisory board in national and international journals and referee assignments for journals: Co-editor of EJSS, 2014- ; Editor of special issue on women and sport in International Journal of the History of Sport (2016-); Editorial/advisory board: Sport in history (2013-), Scandinavian Sport Studies Forum (2012-); Häften för kritiska studier (-1995); Historisk tidskrift (2000-2005); Revue d'histoire Nordique (2003-); Referee assignments in 2011 Journal of Sport History; Sport in History, Sports in society, Sociology of Sport Journal, International review of the Sociology of sport, SSSF (<http://www.sportstudies.org/>), International Journal of the History of Sport, Educare.

Other things to look out for when you change jobs

As an employee, it is easy to assume that the conditions that you have with one employer also apply to others, but this is rarely the case. In the state sector, many terms of employment are regulated by both central and local collective agreements, which means that the conditions may differ from university to university.

Know your intellectual property rights

Higher education institutions make different claims on the copyright for what you produce at work. Most make the correct assessment that the copyright for teaching materials, the right to decide how the material is used and the like belongs to the university teacher. Some do not. SULF recommends that you find out the approach of any potential employer.

Working hours

Local working time agreements on university teachers' opportunities for research and competence development at work vary from institution to institution. Conditions and financing also vary. Find out the conditions that apply according to the collective agreement that applies at your new, prospective employment. If the employer offers you other, in your opinion more favourable, conditions, it is important that these are documented and signed by both you and an authorised representative of the employer.

Negotiate with an authorised representative of the employer

In the higher education sector, it is common that the person you are in contact with before accepting a new position is not the person who is authorised to negotiate terms of employment or make a decision to employ. For example, it could be a professor in a research group to which you are being recruited. These contacts are vital, but it is important that you document what you have agreed and that an employer's representative with the mandate to make a decision on appointments and terms of employment confirms your agreement in writing.

Check your terms of employment

In addition to the employment conditions mentioned above, it is also worthwhile checking conditions such as attendance requirements at the workplace, conditions for partial pension, wellness, working hours and overtime pay.

Document everything that you agree

Discussions and negotiations before starting a new job are usually characterised by mutual trust and positive expectations about the future. Even so, we recommend that all important agreements and clarifications regarding terms of employment be put in writing and signed by authorised parties. Such documentation ensures that any changes of personnel on the employer's side do not mean that important agreements get forgotten.

Changing employment sector

In the state sector, many of your rights and terms of employment are regulated by central and/or local collective agreements. Very few of your terms of employment are regulated in your employment contract, which can be more common in the private sector.

Before a change of employment which also involves a change of employment sector, it is therefore important to examine all of the employment conditions in the new position. Conditions that are important to check include pensions, holiday leave entitlement, working hours, unregulated working hours, insurances and more. All terms of employment that you and the employer have agreed on which are not documented in collective agreements should be included in your employment contract. Before changing sector, it is also important to be aware that income insurance is included automatically in your SULF membership.

Possibility to take leave

If you are permanently employed in the state sector and are offered a fixed-term position by another state sector employer, it is worth considering taking leave of absence rather than terminating your current employment.

Provided that you have been permanently employed for at least one year, you have the right to take leave for up to two years. A state employer also has the right to grant leave of absence in other circumstances. For employment under the terms of the Higher Education Ordinance, it may be possible to take a longer period of leave.

Pay and salary setting

The central salary agreement within the state sector, (RALS-T), states that salaries must be individual, differentiated and set according to a set of basic factors:

- responsibility
- the degree of difficulty of the work
- competence and results.

The salary must also be such that it enables the employer to recruit, retain, motivate and develop employees in the short and long term. Salary setting is to be an instrument to ensure this; it is to stimulate commitment and professional development. The local parties at each higher education institution jointly agree how the salary principles are to be applied. Your local representatives can give you more information about the conditions and circumstances at your institution. It is also a good idea to read through the employer's salary policy and think about your skills and qualifications in relation to the policy.

For teachers and researchers, (and where applicable also doctoral candidates), special factors that affect the salary may include:

Factors related to teaching/pedagogical skills:

- teaching qualifications
- pedagogical development work and production of teaching material
- ability to carry out high quality teaching
- student evaluations.

Make sure to keep your qualifications and experience updated in a "teaching portfolio".

Factors related to research/supervision of doctoral candidates:

- published works
- ability to obtain external research grants
- ability to lead research projects
- supervision of doctoral candidates
- research collaboration
- referee and expert assignments.

Other factors:

- ability to lead and develop staff
- involvement in committees etc
- management of research projects etc
- ability to collaborate with the non-academic world, for example through popular science publications and so on.

Salary statistics

Every year SULF compiles salary statistics and publishes them for members on the My Pages section on sulf.se. The statistics gather relevant salary data for doctoral candidates with employment, postdocs, research assistants, adjunct lecturers, senior lecturers and professors within the state sector. In addition, all SULF members have access to Saco lönesök, which contains salary statistics from all Saco unions. The Saco lönesök data also includes statistics for the private sector.

Legal structure for recruitment processes

Positions as researchers and teachers in higher education are to be offered to those who are best suited. In 2018, a report published by SULF entitled *Ett spel för galleriet? Om anställningsprocesserna i akademien, (Playing to the Gallery? On Recruitment Processes in Higher Education)*, showed that the recruitment processes of higher education institutions in the state sector have some difficulty in living up to this requirement.

For higher education institutions in the state sector, there are legal requirements regarding legal certainty and transparency for both permanent and fixed-term employment positions. No-one who is employed by the state is to be able to get the position on any other grounds than being the most suitable candidate for the job. Formal requirements regarding how employment is to be conducted within the state are to be found in government instruments, the Public Sector Employment Act and the Employment Ordinance. For teachers in higher education, there are also provisions in the Higher Education Act and the Higher Education Ordinance. Previously, there was an exception for short-term employment at state higher education institutions, but since 2011 almost all employment at state higher education institutions is to be advertised.

SULF's report shows that teaching and research positions in higher education are rarely filled by applicants who are not already active at the university

concerned, that advertised vacancies in many cases receive very few applications and that several appointments are made before the closing date for applications or very soon thereafter.

The shortcomings in higher education institutions' processes not only have an impact on their ability to reach and recruit the best, but they also open up for nepotism, reduce mobility and trust in the state sector and ultimately constitute a problem with regard to quality. An important prerequisite for high quality and gender equality in academia is that all employment is conducted in legally secure, transparent processes. SULF has compiled some simple guidelines for what a good employment process should look like.

Checklist for a fair employment process:

Openness, transparency and predictability

The process of employing should be easy to follow and to understand every single time. Positions should be advertised widely through both national and international channels. The employer should provide a description of working conditions, benefits and rights, including the number of positions to be filled and any rules for career development that exist. Applicants should be informed of the recruitment process no later than in connection with the appointment of subject experts chosen to advise the process.

Broad profile

There should be a broad description of the work tasks and of the skills sought. If the requirements are too specific, the number of possible applicants will be reduced.

Entry requirements

Entry and eligibility requirements should be taken from the institution's appointments procedure and should be made available at the time of the announcement of the vacancy. The requirements should not be drawn up individually for each position.

Realistic application period

A short application period in combination with narrowly focused advertising excludes all but internal applicants. The institution thus risks missing out on the most suitable teacher or researcher. In areas with few potential candidates, the application period should be extended to enable international recruitment.

Subject experts with broad expertise

It is easy for personal, subject or other preferences and interests to influence the various parts of the appointments process. Factual arguments should influence assessments and decisions. Experts can represent different specialisations within the subject. The weighted assessment will then more likely be based on the applicant's competence than the experts' own sympathies for their own specialisation within the subject.

Definitions provided to the subject experts

The subject experts should be informed about the way the higher education institution defines scientific and teaching competence so that they know the criteria against which they must measure the candidates. These definitions should not be drawn up individually for each position.

Objective selection for interview

The selection of candidates should be based on actual qualifications and expert assessments. This increases the likelihood of a gender-neutral and objective assessment of the applicants and which of them will be called for an interview.

Clear instructions before interviews and any test lectures

Using the same interview questions for all interviewees makes the interviews comparable. If a trial lecture is included in the process, its purpose should be clear and both internal and external candidates should have the same pre-understanding of the terms of the lecture. The criteria against which the lecture is to be evaluated should be clear.

Appointment Decisions

Appointments should be objective and based on facts. Several types of criteria should be used, both qualitative and quantitative; they should be based on an overall assessment and not just on the number of publications. Bibliometric qualifications should be balanced against other qualifications and skills, such as teaching, independence, creativity, supervision and collaboration with the rest of society.

Appeals against employment decisions

To ensure that the employment processes are followed correctly, you have the possibility to appeal against employment decisions at state sector higher education institutions. Chapter 12, Section 2 of the Higher Education Act gives any person who has applied for a position and not been appointed the right to appeal against the university's employment decision to the Higher Education Appeals Board (ÖNH). The right to appeal applies to all employment positions at higher education institutions except doctoral candidate employment.

In order for you to be able to appeal, the university must have made a decision. This means that even if you have criticism early in the appointment process of how the institution is conducting its process, you must wait for the employment decision to be made. When the institution has made its decision, it is obliged to post it on its bulletin board. It should also inform you if you are an applicant and inform you of your right to appeal against the decision. However, you only have three weeks to appeal, and that period begins as soon as the decision is posted on the institution's bulletin board. If the appeal is received after that, it will not be heard.

Your appeal is to be addressed to the Higher Education Appeals Board, but send it to the higher education institution that made the employment decision. The institution will then administer the appeal and forward it to the Higher Education Appeals Board together with any documentation relevant to the case and the institution's statement on your appeal. The institution's statement will contain an explanation of its position and its comments on what you have written in your appeal.

The first thing the higher education institution does when an appeal is received is to assess whether it was received in time. If it was received outside the three-week period, no further action needs to be taken.

When your appeal has reached the Higher Education Appeals Board, you will be given an opportunity to comment on the university's response to your appeal. This is an opportunity to go further into your arguments regarding why the university has not conducted the appointment correctly. The Appeals Board's handling of appeals varies, but when it has reached its decision, you will be notified as the complainant, as well as the higher education institution and the person who was given the position you appealed about. The Appeals Board's decision cannot be appealed.

What to think about if you wish to appeal:

- All appeals must be submitted in writing.
- It must be clear which decision is being appealed. For example, it may be a good idea to enter the reference number of the decision.
- It must be clear what change in the decision you are requesting. Do you want the whole process to be started from scratch or just part of it? Do you want the institution to decide that you be offered the job?
- It must be clear why you believe this change should be made. What part of the process has not been conducted correctly? What has the institution done wrong? Remember that this is a legal process and that emotional comments may get in the way of your argument. Keep it short and concise.
- Address your appeal to the Higher Education Appeals Board, but send it to the higher education institution that made the decision you are appealing.
- Include your contact details.
- Do not forget to sign the appeal.

Taking a job abroad

Spending a period working abroad is probably one of the most common pieces of advice you will receive before beginning your academic career. There are many different forms of overseas work in higher education.

Overseas posting

Being posted overseas means that you have been sent to another country by your employer to perform work there on behalf of that employer. If your employment is at a higher education institution in the Swedish state sector, you are covered by Swedish social insurance in the same way as in Sweden, regardless of which country you are posted to. If you are employed at Chalmers or Jönköping University, the same applies within the EU/EEA. If you are employed at a private university, other rules apply which, unfortunately, are less favourable.

Within the state sector, there is a collective agreement on overseas contracts and guidelines for employment conditions for abroad, URA. This provides a framework for terms of employment that are to be or may be regulated when working abroad. During the time you are posted, you are not fully covered by the collective agreement Villkorsavtal-T. Instead, your terms of employment are specified in a written agreement about the position, an overseas contract.

Your overseas contract should specify:

- your work tasks
- your home base abroad, i.e. where you are posted
- the length/dates of your posting
- your salary benefits and the date of your salary review
- other employment terms, such as salary, working time, holiday allowance and other leave, sick pay, pension and insurances, as well as compensation for housing costs, relocation costs and travel home.

Local employment by a foreign employer

If you are not posted or employed in Sweden for longer visits abroad, you are probably employed locally. As a local employee, you are covered by the employment conditions that apply at your foreign university.

Social insurances while working abroad

If you are posted abroad, you are covered by the Swedish social insurance system. If you are not posted, you may only belong to the Swedish insurance system for a maximum of one year, (two years within the EU/EEA). After this, you are no longer covered by Swedish social insurance. Within the EU/EEA, including Switzerland, you are instead entitled to social insurance benefits in your new country of employment, and you may also combine insurance periods in two or more EU/EEA countries in order to qualify for a benefit.

Marie Curie Scholarship

Recipients of a Marie Curie Scholarship may in some cases be considered an employee in the country in which they are working. In such a case, you are covered by that country's social insurance, just like other employees, and not the Swedish system. There is some uncertainty about what exactly applies in these cases. We therefore suggest that you contact the foreign higher education institution and that country's equivalent Social Insurance Agency for clarification. In Sweden, recipients of a Marie Curie Scholarship have the right to receive sickness benefit and parental benefit, for example, in part because the scholarship is taxed.

Unemployment insurance while working abroad

Different rules apply, depending on whether you are employed locally by a foreign employer, working abroad and employed by a Swedish employer, or working but funded by a scholarship rather than being employed. Whichever is the case, SULF always recommends contacting the unemployment insurance fund Akademikernas a-kassa (AEA) in good time before you leave for your position abroad.

Practical advice for working abroad

Your stay abroad may be as a posted employee, a scholarship holder or a local employee at a foreign university or research institute. The form it takes has a significant impact on your rights and your insurance coverage, but SULF has compiled some practical advice and tips that may be of general help.

The most important thing for a rewarding and safe period of working abroad is to plan well in advance and have a realistic schedule. In addition, the following may be worth considering.

Around a year before departure:

- Think about where you want to go and for how long.
- Contact possible universities and departments.
- Visit interesting universities/institutions and deliver guest lectures. Consider what kind of housing is best. Compare costs for storage/rental/relocation.
- Examine employment conditions/scholarship conditions, salary levels and the impact on your pension of your intended work abroad.
- If you intend to travel abroad as a scholarship holder, find out about application dates for funding and foundations.

At least six months before:

- Establish and maintain contact with your future host institution/employer.
- Make initial contact with a removal company and plan for the move.
- Begin the visa application process.

At least one month before:

- If possible, travel to the host country and look for somewhere to live before you move.
- If you are relocating with family and children, contact schools.
- Open a bank account in the host country – this is often a requirement in order to be able to pay rent and so on.
- Check with the Swedish Tax Agency which country you are to pay tax in. Request written confirmation of the decision.
- Obtain a social security number or the equivalent.
- Contact the removal company and confirm the destination address.

Trade union services abroad

SULF members who work abroad for a maximum of two years have the right to guest membership of one of SULF's sister unions in Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Finland, Norway and Denmark. As a guest member, you are entitled to advice and support regarding your employment contract, salary and other union and labour market matters. A prerequisite for guest membership is that you remain a member of SULF during the entire period.

Your guest membership can be for a maximum of two years, after which you must apply for full membership of the organisation. During your period in the other country, no additional fee is charged, but you continue to pay your membership fee to the union in your home country.

To be able to utilise guest membership during your stay abroad, it is necessary for SULF to notify the sister association in advance. You must therefore apply for guest membership before you move abroad. Information on how to apply can be found on our website, sulf.se.

Union support while working abroad

SULF has agreements on guest membership with the following organisations:

- Dansk Magisterforening (DM), Denmark
- Forskerforbundet, Norway
- Forskarförbundet (Tieteentekijöiden liito), Finland
- The University and College Union (UCU), United Kingdom
- Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT), Ireland
- Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), Canada.

Exit strategy



What happens if you move outside academia?

During your time as a doctoral candidate, you can easily get the impression that academia is the only world you have trained for. Just over one per cent of the population aged 25 to 64 have a doctorate. Only a third of those who complete their doctorate stay in higher education, even though the figures vary greatly between different subject areas. In the social sciences, about 60 per cent continue as teachers in higher education, while just over 20 per cent of scientists, technologists and medical doctors stay. Most of you reading this who are doctoral candidates will therefore move elsewhere. Having knowledge and insight into your value in alternative employment sectors puts you in a stronger position.

Do you know what you know?

When people have just completed their doctorate, they often think that what they know and can do is very narrow and very specific. Often it is something that they think only has value within academia. And that's true in some ways. Few other employers are looking for specialist knowledge in specific thesis areas. At the same time, most people who have left academia say that their doctoral studies have given them an advantage and that they have a job that builds on the knowledge they have acquired through their doctoral studies and which could not be done by someone with just a bachelor's degree.

To be able to talk to potential employers outside higher education, you need to identify the generic knowledge your doctoral studies have given you and what you can do with it. A good start is to look at the System of Qualifications for the doctoral programme if you have not already done so. It includes statements, (rewritten here in first-person form), like:

- I am able to analyse scientifically and independently examine and assess new and complex phenomena, issues and situations.
- I am able to critically, independently, creatively and with scientific accuracy identify and formulate issues, as well as conduct research and other qualified tasks within given time frames and to review and evaluate such work.

- I am able to present and discuss research with authority, both orally and in writing.
- I am able to identify the need for further knowledge.

If you were an employer, would you want to employ this person? Many employers do, but they do not always know what people learn during a doctoral programme. You need to be able to tell them.

Describing your competence

After your doctoral studies, in addition to the competence you acquired ahead of your thesis defence, you have many other skills and experience that are worth highlighting in a CV when you apply for a job outside higher education.

List and describe your professional experience

Example questions for inspiration:

- Have you held any leadership roles or perhaps been a Director of Studies? What did these assignments entail and what insights did they provide?
- Have you been a manager or had other staff responsibilities?
- Have you led projects, applied for funding and been responsible for budget, finance and financial reporting?
- Have you developed new courses or perhaps received awards for your educational work?
- Do you have long experience of working in English, Chinese or other languages that would be of interest to potential employers?

In addition to your CV, you will need a personal letter in which you present yourself and highlight the personal qualities and experiences that make you particularly suitable for the job you are applying for.

Within higher education, a personal letter is of relatively little importance compared with publications and other qualifications on your academic CV. In the world outside academia, your personal letter can make the difference between even being considered a serious candidate or not, let alone being called for an interview.

Your personal letter may contain more or less the same basic information each time, but it should be tailored to each job you apply for.

Five tips for your personal letter:

- Explain why you are applying for this job, why you want to work in this particular organisation and why you are a suitable candidate.
- Present your personal qualities and motivators. Limit yourself to a selection and adapt them to the position you are applying for. Use examples to give an idea of how you have shown these.
- Keep it short – no more than one A4 page.
- Offer to provide references.

Remember to include contact details and to proofread your letter. Otherwise, your application may just end up in the wastepaper basket.

Finding the job

In the same way as in higher education, you can find potential jobs by the employer advertising them, but it is worth remembering that only state sector employers are obliged to advertise vacancies and appoint staff in a competitive process. This means that there are totally different opportunities to proactively contact companies that are of interest, introduce yourself and ask if they have an opening for you and your skills. In other words, your network is extremely valuable.

When talking about networks, it is easy to restrict yourself to the people in your face-to-face networks, but your electronic networks are no less important. Through your profiles on Twitter, Facebook and especially LinkedIn, there are opportunities to find and make contacts. If they are not relevant employers themselves, they may be able to help you get in touch with those who are.

You should ensure that your LinkedIn profile is always up to date so that interested potential employers can easily see your qualifications and skills.

Remove potential obstacles

If you are one of the many researchers and doctoral students whose first language is not Swedish but who intend to stay in Sweden and pursue a career outside higher education, it is essential that you learn Swedish.

Unlike academia, which is often bilingual and sometimes entirely English-speaking, large parts of the Swedish labour market are only accessible to those who speak Swedish. There are, of course, exceptions among international companies, including those in the life sciences, but your employment opportunities will be much greater if you can speak Swedish.

Add new qualifications

Something else to consider is whether you need any further qualifications to maximise your chances of getting the kind of job that you are interested in. It is also the case that some professions or areas require certain certifications or professional qualifications.

For example, to work in life sciences you may need to obtain a GMP certificate, and to be able to work as a teacher in secondary or upper-secondary school you will need teaching certification. You can qualify for the latter through a KPU bridging programme.

Start your own business?

Depending on what you want to do when you leave academia, starting your own business may be an interesting option. Perhaps you have discovered or invented something that you could commercialise through your own company?

It's a good idea to start by contacting a business consultant to get a professional assessment of the viability of your potential company. If you are registered with the Job Security Foundation, (Trygghetsstiftelsen), they offer such support. Otherwise, help is available at your local start-up centre, (NyföretagarCentrum).

Can you come back?

There is a great fear among many academics that if they take a job outside academia they can never go back. We have probably also believed that too strongly and have pushed for a long time to make it easier for people to move in and out of academia. But when the Swedish Research Council recently set out to investigate this issue, they found that there is a significant flow of people into and out of the higher education sector. It seems that

many people leave the higher education sector both after having a career development position and after a position as a senior lecturer. But there are also many who return.

The Job Security Foundation – a resource for state sector employees

If you have been employed in the state sector and have been made redundant due to a lack of work, or had a fixed-term position that lasted at least two years and has come to an end, you can get help from Trygghetsstiftelsen, the Job Security Foundation. This is the result of a collective agreement and does not require any membership or other activity on your part. How you were employed in the state sector and for how long determines what level of support you can receive.

The aim of the Job Security Foundation is to help you get a new job. The support they provide is individualised; they help around 2,000 clients every year. They are used to meeting academics from universities and colleges. Eight out of ten people who register with the Foundation find a new job within a short time.

They offer support with identifying your potential job market and your skills, polishing your CV and personal letter and other help that a career coach can provide. If you fulfil the eligibility requirements, they can also offer financial support as a supplement to your unemployment insurance.

How does it work?

If you have fulfilled the qualification criteria through state sector employment, your employer will notify you when your employment ends. You will then receive an email from the Foundation with information about your personal counsellor. Your counsellor will then guide you through the job search process.

Find out more at www.tsn.se

Do you want to lead an expedition?



Expedition leader

Both small and large expeditions need an expedition leader, and most people who are active within academia have some form of leadership assignment during their career. For example, you can become a leader by virtue of establishing and building up your own research group. This is an informal kind of leadership in the sense that it is seldom regulated by rules of procedure. It is a form of leadership that is not always elective, but is almost a career requirement in certain environments.

Another way is that you, for example in your job as an adjunct lecturer, accept an assignment as director of studies or, perhaps as a senior lecturer, take on the role of course/subject/programme director. These assignments are usually formal in the sense that there is a job description, but informal in the sense that you are not a manager, meaning that you are expected to lead a group that will carry out a shared assignment, but it is unclear who has the mandate to make decisions if disagreements arise in the group.

If you are offered a leadership role on a small or large scale, it is important that you find out what the conditions are before you accept. This does not primarily mean the financial and career conditions – see below – but the terms of the assignment: what you are expected to do and what resources, (including how much time), are available to you. Then make an assessment of whether you think that you will be able to do a satisfactory job in the circumstances described. If not, say no or demand better conditions.

When you take on a leadership position, you should approach it in the same way as you approach your research. Plan, document and evaluate your work. Learn from your mistakes. Becoming a good leader requires practice and reflection, in the same way as if you want to be good at sports or anything else. Also, take any opportunities you can get for leadership training. You can't learn to be a leader through tips and tricks, but you can learn through self-reflection and discussion with others about various problems and challenges.

Sometimes, leadership courses are organised in collaboration between different higher education institutions or by SUHF, the Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions. These are especially useful for the simple reason that you have the opportunity to meet people with other experiences.

These days, higher education institutions today are organised in completely different ways, and insight into the differences and similarities provides useful knowledge when forming your leadership style and approach.

The financial terms for different leadership assignments vary, but at higher education institutions there are usually fixed salary supplements for different positions. But you should also ensure that the assignment does not damage your future career prospects. You may want to safeguard your scope to maintain your teaching qualifications or your chances to conduct research in the future. In some disciplines, it is sufficient that you can take time during the assignment to be a researcher one day a week, but in others it is better to leave research for the period of the assignment and instead have continuous research time when the assignment has been completed. If you take on a more extensive assignment – for example, to become a head of department – you should ensure that you have time to re-establish yourself as a researcher after the assignment.

Taking on a leadership assignment is almost always beneficial to you in the long run. It provides knowledge of the system, and system knowledge is, as pointed out previously, necessary for you to be able to orientate yourself.

What to think about when considering taking a leadership assignment:

The terms of the assignment:

- what you are expected to do and what resources are available to you
- financial compensation for the assignment
- agreement on a re-establishment period after the assignment.

What support is offered during the assignment:

- administrative support
- leadership training/support, coaching or mentoring
- support from the institution's HR department.

Leading an expedition as a woman

Among senior executives in business, women are rare. It doesn't look like that in higher education. There is a fairly even gender balance at vice-

chancellor and dean level. But there are fewer female heads of department than men at universities and more women than men at teaching-heavy higher education institutions. To some extent, this is because gender balance among senior lecturers and professors is skewed, and in terms of numbers, most leadership roles are as senior lecturer or professor.

Almost all higher education institutions have or have had different programmes aimed at achieving improved gender balance, from special support, mentoring programmes or leadership training for women who have been identified as potential leaders to financial incentives that will make it in the institutions' interest that women acquire the relevant qualifications to become senior lecturers or professors in order to increase the pool of potential leaders.

Sometimes we think that higher education is different from the world of business, and that is true in many ways. But being a female leader in a workplace where most other leaders are men is the same in all parts of the labour market.

Academic leadership roles

Academic leadership assignments can have different names and different contents depending on how the institution is organised. Following the autonomy reform that came into force in 2011, it is up to each higher education institution to decide on its own internal organisation below the board and the vice-chancellor level. The following titles are common, but are not found everywhere.

Head of Department (*Prefekt*): runs a department.

Dean (*Dekan*): runs a faculty, academy or school, depending on the term used by the higher education institution.

Vice-chancellor (*Rektor*): appointed by the government on suggestion of the board and runs the higher education institution directly below the board. Also a member of the board.

Pro-vice-chancellor (*Prorektor*): deputises for the vice-chancellor.

Deputy Vice-chancellor (*Vicerektor*): usually responsible for a specific area, such as international matters, teaching issues or a faculty.

SULF -supporting you
throughout your expedition



SULF's demands for the design of an attractive university teaching career

The Swedish Association for University Teachers and Researchers, SULF, consistently pursues the issue of attractive career paths as an important part of guaranteeing the quality of both education and research. Clear career paths provide a win-win situation for all, and the only way to make them attractive is to offer better employment conditions and more secure employment.

- The university teaching career must include only a limited number of fixed-term employment positions, and it should be predictable and possible to plan.
Comment: It is difficult for both women and men to combine parenthood with fixed-term employment.
- Career criteria must be visible and not contradictory.
Comment: The classic example here is postdoctoral periods abroad in a new area that lead to a lag in the number of published articles.
- Scientific proficiency must not be defined as a fixed quantitative measure of the number of published articles per year.
Comment: Parental leave and other breaks in research are demeritising, even though in a broader perspective they may make the person a better researcher.
- Recruitment must be conducted through open and legally secure processes.
Comment: Hidden criteria breed informal networks.
- Assessment for promotion must be a right, and promotion must be based on transparent criteria.
- Higher education institutions must give all employees the opportunity to develop their competence, thus enabling them to contribute to the institution's ability to conduct research and education in close collaboration and give them recognition for competence development.

SULF is the only trade union that is fully focused on higher education

Strength!

- SULF is the only trade union that focuses entirely on higher education and the working and employment conditions of doctoral candidates, university teachers and researchers at universities, colleges and research institutes.
- We know local issues. We are nearby. SULF has active SULF associations at almost all universities and college.

Security!

- We know higher education, so we know what problems can arise in an academic career. And of course, we offer attractive deals on insurances and banking to our members.
- The SULF income insurance is included automatically as part of your membership and is tailored to academic careers.

Knowledge!

- SULF knows higher education and its regulatory framework. We know your rights.
- Our website, sulf.se, contains the information, advice and knowledge you need to be able to meet most of the challenges you will face in your academic career.

For more information and full contact details, please see

www.sulf.se

