



JÖNKÖPING UNIVERSITY

Assignment to establish a Centre for Academic Teaching and Learning at Jönköping University

18.10.2021

Ref. No. JU 2021/4455-113

President's Decision § 958

1 The challenges facing Jönköping University and the aim of the assignment

Jönköping University (JU) is facing major challenges. In part, this is due to societal changes in conjunction with the COVID-19 pandemic; for example, students' and teachers' experiences (positive as well as negative) of distance learning have shown the need to evaluate and develop previously accepted pedagogical methods. Distance examinations held during the pandemic have also highlighted the need to develop improved examinations in order to achieve a higher degree of precision and legal certainty. JU also lacks a university-wide seminar culture for pedagogical issues. Competence in teaching and learning in higher education is dispersed across the university's four schools with little or no collaboration. The existing range of courses on academic teaching and learning needs to be developed to cover both theoretical knowledge and practical know-how.

Meeting these challenges will require a sustainable, functional organisation that can offer pedagogical support and inspiration to JU's teachers. In order to build such an organisation, we intend to establish a Centre for Academic Teaching and Learning at Jönköping University. This will be accomplished by expanding the scope of the University Library's assignment to encompass support for the pedagogical development of JU's teaching staff.

Aim of the assignment: To establish a Centre for Academic Teaching and Learning at Jönköping University.

The assignment includes the centre's responsibility for driving the development of JU's academic teaching and learning courses. The Centre for Academic Teaching and Learning should primarily offer support in four ways: via a digital platform on the JU website; through personal meetings with individual or small groups of teachers; by organising large meetings such as university-wide courses and seminars; and by providing relevant premises, including the teaching lab described below. Organised meetings arranged by the Centre for Academic Teaching and Learning can suitably take the form of courses, seminars and/or workshops. It would also be appropriate for the Centre for Academic Teaching and Learning to act as JU's point of contact for international, national and regional partners in the field of teaching and learning in higher education.

The Centre for Academic Teaching and Learning will need to work closely with the core business and facilitate the achievement of JU's vision of being a leading knowledge environment.

2 The scope of the expanded assignment

Overall objective: The overall objective of the Centre for Academic Teaching and Learning is to contribute to that Jönköping University can continue to be and be perceived as an institution that provides higher education using relevant, modern pedagogy and technology, as well as further increasing the perception of JU's teachers as highly professional in terms of both the content and methods of their teaching.

The expanded assignment can be divided into three parts, each of which has its specific goals. No later than by the end of 2022 and 2023, reports shall be submitted to the Vice President for Education regarding the progress of the assignment in order to ensure that the centre is in a position to achieve its overall objective.

Part 1: Creating the necessary conditions

The assignment shall lead to that:

- a framework to support JU's teaching staff is in place and the Centre for Academic Teaching and Learning's organisation is staffed with the relevant functions for future periods;
- an attractive, relevant university-wide range of academic teaching and learning courses has been specified, including prerequisite courses, courses in introductory training on teaching at a higher education institution in Sweden, courses and training on more specific teaching methods and aspects such as fair examinations; and
- a platform on the JU website where teachers can find tips and advice on teaching and learning in higher education, and where information on available support is clearly presented.

Part 2: Creating an inspiring environment

The assignment shall lead to that:

- JU has one or more teaching labs in which JU's teachers can test state-of-the-art methods and tools for teaching and learning in higher education. The teaching lab(s) shall be equipped and ready for use no later than the end of 2023 and a plan shall be in place for how such premises can be kept up to date and relevant and made available to all of JU's teachers regardless of which school they are affiliated to.

Part 3: Ongoing pedagogical support for teachers

The assignment shall lead to that:

- by the end of 2023, all of JU's teachers will have been offered support for teaching technology and formulating legally certain examinations. All teachers shall be offered attractive seminars on issues related to teaching and learning in higher education; and
- no later than the end of 2023, functioning procedures are in place to annually offer all JU teaching staff support for teaching technology, to annually offer all JU teachers regular, attractive seminars on issues related to teaching and learning in higher education, and to offer all JU teachers an attractive, relevant range of academic teaching and learning courses.

The Centre for Academic Teaching and Learning's remit shall include monitoring and documenting the results of the entire range of JU's academic teaching and learning support (personal support, courses, seminars, teaching labs, etc.) and how the support is distributed among JU's schools.

3 Organisational aspects

One fundamental principle of JU's support for teaching and learning in higher education is that the support should be available to every teacher at JU at no additional cost to the individual teacher or course. Another equally fundamental principle is that all of JU's teachers shall be offered equal opportunities to use the resources of the centre, regardless of their school affiliation.

Achieving the objectives of a Centre for Academic Teaching and Learning at Jönköping University is predicated on the centre being organised in a manner that allows the university's core business to exert influence over its operations. This is especially true when it comes to staffing. Therefore, JU's Strategic Committee for Education (SRU) will act as a reference group on key issues.

The centre will have a director and pedagogical development specialists who will have a university-wide mission. The director shall have good insight into the challenges and opportunities presented by teaching in higher education and, ideally, will be familiar with JU's organisation. Pedagogical development specialists shall have a good level of expertise regarding teaching and learning in higher education and be highly service-oriented when dealing with teaching staff. The centre may also need to engage the services of individuals with a good working knowledge of specific technical solutions, such as digital teaching aids.

Recruitment to the centre will be conducted by the Library Director in consultation with the Vice President for Education, who will have final approval. Staffing needs shall be regularly reviewed and adjusted in consultation with the reference group.

As part of its expanded assignment, the University Library shall provide premises for the centre's operations. Initially, the following are considered to be prerequisites for a functioning Centre for Academic Teaching and Learning: an office for the director of the centre, office space for other staff affiliated to the centre (this may involve some staff sharing offices) and at least one classroom. The centre's classroom(s) shall be available to all teaching staff at JU. It may, however, be appropriate to coordinate with the University Library's own teaching activities.

It may prove advantageous to include premises at one or more of JU's schools within the framework of the centre, teaching labs for example, in which case such premises shall also be freely available to all of JU's teachers on equal terms regardless of their school affiliation. The centre's need for premises shall be reviewed on a regular basis.

4 Timetable for beginning the assignment

The aim is for the organisation to be up and running by the beginning of January 2022. However, Part 1 needs to begin as soon as possible during 2021. The assignment's goal-attainment shall be evaluated in late 2023 in order to make any necessary corrections.

5 Costs associated with the expanded assignment

The cost of employing a director will not affect the companies' contributions to joint costs, as this will be met within the existing framework. Additional costs for the period 2022–2023 will be met by Jönköping University Foundation. Depending on the centre's operations at the end of 2023, discussions will be held regarding which parts of the operation will be accommodated within the existing framework and which might be financed in some other way. The Foundation will allocate 25% of a full-time equivalent for each pedagogical development specialist (one per school/JUE) affiliated to the centre during the period 2022–2023, after which costs will be met by each school/Jönköping University Enterprise (JUE).

The Foundation has allocated funds for 2022 for establishing the university-wide Centre for Academic Teaching and Learning. The director will be given a budget for equipping one or more teaching labs affiliated to the centre. The budget will be discussed by the reference group (SRU) and approved by the Vice President for Education, and is not to exceed SEK 2 million for 2022. The director will be given a budget for the maintenance of teaching labs and other running costs, such as training activities. The budget will be discussed by the reference group and approved by the Vice President for Education, and is not to exceed SEK 1 million for 2022.