

Kunnskapsdepartementet

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Deres ref.: 15/1643

Dato: 03.09.2015

Innspill til høring – forslag til endring av universitets og høskoleloven og egenbetalingsforskriften

Stipendiatenes interesseforening ved Universitetet i Oslo (UiODoc) ønsker med dette notatet å gi innspill til Kunnskapsdepartementets forslag til endring av lov av 1. april 2005 nr. 15 om universiteter og høskoler. Notatet er utarbeidet i samsvar med Stipendiatorganisasjonene i Norge (SiN).

5. Beregning av tjenestetid for stipendiater

Departementet foreslår og endre § 6-4 fjerde ledd til å lyde:

(4) For stillinger etter første ledd bokstavene f til i, gir departementet forskrift om varighet, arbeidets omfang og innhold og om adgangen til å fornye ansettelsesforholdet. *Departementet kan i forskrift fastsette regler om beregning av tjenestetid etter lov 4. mars nr. 3 om statens tjenestemenn m.m. §§ 9 og 10 for stipendiater.*

OBS! Fordi mange av UiODocs medlemmer er bare engelskspråklige, skriver vi resten av høringsinnspillet på engelsk:

Even though UiODoc acknowledges that there are several arguments in favour of these propositions, we are critical to the proposed changes in the original form. On one hand those changes might lead to a more flexible situation where graduates that otherwise would be forced to leave their Higher Education Institution (HEI) have a chance continue their work in a temporary position. This can be considered an improvement for the current temporary employees, as a more stable employment situation is created that allows for easier long-term

planning, both professionally and privately. However, we believe that this gives incentives to HEIs to offer good candidates alternative temporary positions instead of postdoc positions or “førsteamanuensis” positions. Moreover, it is likely that an increase in temporary positions would reduce the HEI’s need for creating or reappointing permanent positions in general, as many functions can be taken over by highly qualified academic employees in temporary positions. We are worried that this will open up for a situation in which emerging academics are stuck in a loop of temporary positions for even longer than they are today, while at the same time the number of permanent positions is steadily decreasing. This is likely to have a strong effect on employees’ commitment, motivation and productivity.

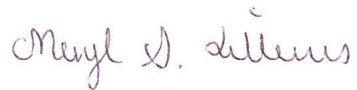
UiODoc would therefore like to emphasize the importance of developing effective initiatives that enable and encourage Norwegian HEIs to provide for permanent positions in order to ensure realistic prospects of a long-term employment to academic staff. The proposed changes could send a wrong signal both to the institutions and young academics who – being faced with the newly created opportunity of extending their contracts at their home institution - might be tempted to take on several temporary positions at the same institution without realistic chances of permanent employment. At the same time this will undermine the importance of moving to another institution, if only for a while. The benefits of gathering new experiences and expanding networks would be reduced for both the individual as well as the overall research environment. This would counteract the ongoing efforts of creating an international, top-notch research environment at Norwegian HEIs.

Another issue raised by this proposal is that it may be interpreted that the Ministry is taking a step towards giving PhDs a student status, invoking several negative consequences regarding employment conditions. This is unfortunate as it can reduce the attractiveness of the PhD position in Norwegian HEIs. We also want to stress the importance of not reducing the salary grade as a consequence of reducing the seniority as this has not been clarified in the proposal.

As we see both arguments for and against the proposed changes, UiODoc proposes to consider a compromise in which PhD and postdoc positions would indeed gain less seniority than they do today, but still more than what is suggested as of now. We believe time spent at the same institution should be adding something to your seniority. For example, seniority could be calculated by adding all obligatory duties as well as half of the remaining years. That means that a 3 year PhD without teaching or other duties will count as 1.5 years, whereas a 4

year PhD with one year of teaching or other duties will count as 2.5 years. This opens up for short temporary employments after a PhD position to finish projects and get some extra experience. At the same time it protects temporary employees to be employed in multiple temporary positions for a long period after their PhD.

På vegne av Stipendiatenes interesseforening ved Universitetet i Oslo (UiODoc),



Meryl Sønnerbye Lillenes, Leder UiODoc