Lecturer at Swiss Universitites of Applied Sciences
An information brochure for women on the job characteristics and requirements of future lecturers at Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS)

bfh.ch/uas-lecturer
This is a new edition of the «Fachhochschul-Dozentin» brochure which appeared in October 2006. Just like the first one, this present revised edition was financially supported by the Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET) and the Department of Engineering and Information Technology of the Bern University of Applied Sciences (BUAS) as part of the federal program to promote equality of opportunities for men and women at Universities of Applied Sciences.

The new edition was suggested by the management of the cooperation project «Nachwuchsförderung von Frauen in Lehre und Forschung», where it is meant to be used.

It is the aim of this common project between the Bern University of Applied Sciences and the Gender and Diversity Institute of the University of Applied Sciences Eastern Switzerland (FHO) to encourage qualified women to work in teaching and applied research and development at Universities of Applied Sciences. This common project is also supported by the OPET.

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2nd edition, August 2012
I. Purpose of this brochure

The Universities of Applied Sciences have become an important pillar of the Swiss University System. The courses of the Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS) meet with great demand 1. They are constantly broadened.

Women are still underrepresented in lectureships (Swiss Federal Statistical Office, 2010 2), especially in technical subjects. The share of female UAS lecturers should be increased in all subjects. Equal gender representation among lecturers would be ideal.

Unfortunately, potential female candidates still rarely consider a lectureship at UAS as a possible career option. This may be due to the fact that the profession of UAS lecturer is not yet sufficiently well-known. In Switzerland, there have been public Universities of Applied Sciences only since 1998 3.

It is the aim of this brochure to inform potential candidates – particularly women – about the teaching profession and requirements of the UAS lectureship and to promote such a profession as a desirable academic career choice. This should also help ensure continuity of lecturers at UAS.

The brochure is meant to show women how attractive it is to become a UAS lecturer and encourage qualified young academic graduates and scientists to pursue this career option.

II. Target readers

Target readers of this brochure are:

- University graduates
- PhD students, assistants and other scientific collaborators of universities and research institutes
- University-trained women in employment
- Career councillors
- Persons dealing with equality, diversity and mentoring in enterprises
- Equal opportunity commissioners at universities and research institutes
- Personnel managers

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2 www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/en/index/themen/20/05/blank/key/ueberblick.html
III. UAS lecturer: an attractive career choice!

The work of a UAS lecturer is extremely interesting, wide-ranging and thrilling. It combines teaching, applied research and development and cooperation with industries. A cornerstone of this job profile is to communicate with motivated young people who are prepared for a challenging career.

In addition, lecturing at UAS level offers many opportunities:

- having great freedom of design in approaching new tasks in practice-related teaching and application-centred research
- participating in university development (maintain national/international university contacts, design new studies, form research institutes, promote equality, etc.)
- participating in university management (lead departments or faculties, etc.)
- combining job and family (because this job allows part-time structures and offers personal freedom in the use of time)
- maintaining many contacts to the industry in the form of providing services
- carrying out a limited amount of secondary employment (e.g. lecturing at other universities, counselling, participation in scientific, artistic or subject-specific commissions outside the university)
- teaching motivated students in reasonable class sizes and small project groups
- receiving continuous subject and didactic training

IV. A University of Applied Sciences as place of work for women

What is a University of Applied Sciences?

Switzerland introduced Universities of Applied Sciences in 1998 as a new educational institution in the tertiary sector, i.e. at university level. In contrast to state universities and the Federal Institutes of Technology, they are based on teaching students with a professional baccalaureate. Thus, the professional baccalaureate may lead to a university degree like the traditional grammar school baccalaureate. The strength of the Universities of Applied Sciences lies in practical training, which is complemented by general education subjects. In addition, the Universities of Applied Sciences conduct applied research and development, offer continuing education and render services.

The Universities of Applied Sciences are responsible for a direct transfer of modern technologies and new scientific knowledge to the economy thanks to their strong industry links in teaching and research and also thanks to their further training programs for professionals, thus, they contribute substantially to the promotion of innovation and support the Swiss economic development.

The federal government promotes the development of UAS in the following eleven domains: Technology and Information Technology; Architecture, Civil Engineering and Planning; Chemistry and Life Sciences; Agriculture and Forestry; Economics and Services; Design; Health; Social Work; Music, Theatre and other Arts; Applied Psychology; Applied Linguistics. The most popular bachelor degree lies in Business Administration, followed by Social Work, Nursing, IT, Architecture, Mechanical Engineering and Music.

It is a particularity of UAS that the Swiss government desires a distribution of tasks and cooperation between the regions for the UAS. Therefore, the Swiss government works together with the cantons, which are the executive bodies of UAS, and their common administrative structures. The federal government and the cantons share the responsibility in the area of UAS for a well-functioning overall system.
The nine Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences
At present, there are nine UAS in Switzerland, of which seven are public and two are private (Kalaidos University of Applied Sciences and Les Roches-Gruyère University of Applied Sciences):

- **Bern University of Applied Sciences** (www.bfh.ch)
  located in Berne, Biel, Burgdorf, Magglingen and Zollikofen.

- **University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland** (www.fhnw.ch)
  located in Aarau, Basle, Brugg-Windisch, Liestal, Muttenz, Olten, Solothurn and Zofingen.

- **University of Applied Sciences Eastern Switzerland** (www.fho.ch)
  located in Buchs, Chur, Rapperswil, Rorschach and St. Gallen.

- **University of Applied Sciences and Arts Western Switzerland** (www.hesso.ch)
  located in Delémont, Fribourg, Geneva, La-Chaux-de-Fonds, Lausanne, Le Locle, Leukerbad, Neuchâtel, Changins, Sierre, Sion, St. Imier, Visp and Yverdon-les-Bains.

- **Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts** (www.hslu.ch)
  located in Horw and Lucerne.

- **University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland** (www.supsi.ch)
  located in Brig, Canobbio, Landquart, Locarno, Lugano, Manno, Trevano and Verscio.

- **Zürcher Fachhochschule** (www.zfh.ch)
  located in Dübendorf, Wädenswil, Winterthur and Zurich.

- **Kalaidos University of Applied Sciences Switzerland** (www.kalaidos-fh.ch)
  located in Aarau, Basle, Berne, St. Gallen and Zurich.

- **Les Roches-Gruyère University of Applied Sciences** (www.lrguas.ch)
  located in Bluche and Bulle.

In the coming years, locations will be reduced in several UAS. Corresponding construction projects are already being realised or planned, resulting in extremely attractive campuses.

**Studying at UAS**
Constantly rising student numbers are an indication for how attractive this UAS study is. The average entry age is 24 years, while students at classical universities begin their studies at the age of 21. 1st year UAS students are usually older than their university colleagues because a work background is required.

The UAS study is structured in two levels. The first level leads to the **Bachelors degree**, the second to the **Masters degree**. UAS may offer their studies as full-time study (of at least 3 years), as part-time study or as a combination of both.

[www.opet.admin.ch > Topics > Universities of Applied Sciences > Studies](http://www.opet.admin.ch) provides an overview of all Bachelor and Master degree courses which are offered at the nine Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences.

The spectrum of studies at UAS is **wide** and is **continuously broadened**. A traditional emphasis lies in technical and business studies. Therefore, new lecturers will be sought in these areas in the near future. There are also great opportunities in new fields of study, e.g. where health experts are trained.

The websites of the Rectors’ Conference of the Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences (www.kfh.ch), the Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (www.opet.admin.ch) and the individual UAS provide further information about the Universities of Applied Sciences.
V. Image and conditions of UAS lecturers

Tasks and activities
The teaching staff of UAS has four main tasks: Training, further training, application-centred research and development, and provision of services. In addition, UAS cooperate with other national and international universities and research institutions. The first priority lies in the education of students. However, all lecturers should in principle also do some research.

Within the framework of these tasks, UAS lecturers perform a wide range of activities:

– providing application-centred basic and specialised know-how,
– carrying out exams,
– supporting self-study activities through coaching and tutoring (individually or in small groups),
– organising further training courses and excursions,
– ensuring the connection between the economy and society through application-centred research and development projects,
– planning and acquiring research and development projects which are mainly financed externally, taking responsibility for successfully executing them,
– presenting and publishing their research and development results,
– participating in administration, design and further development of the university,
– participating in subject-specific, pedagogical and administrative further training courses,
– coaching young academics.

Working hours
Teaching duties of a full-time UAS lecturership usually contain around 80% of the working hours. At the Bern University of Applied Sciences, this corresponds to 16 lessons per term week. A term lasts between 14 and 16 weeks. About 20% of the working time is available for research. Lecturers at UAS may exclusively teach. This increases their teaching duties accordingly.

The teaching duties are high compared to traditional universities. Accordingly, the time for research and other tasks is much more limited. However, teaching duties may be reduced for special research tasks and are also reduced by several hours when administrative duties (such as leading a department) are taken on.

Lecturers may be awarded sabbaticals to increase their research activities or for further training purposes in their own subject field. During sabbaticals, they are relieved from teaching duties.

In comparison to many other jobs, the opportunities to arrange working hours individually are very large.

Part-time lecturerships are the rule at Swiss UAS. Almost three quarters of UAS lecturers are employed for less than 50%. Only about a tenth of all lecturers have an employment of 90% or more.

The research activities are reduced or left out completely for part-time lecturers. By contrast, traditional universities rarely offer part-time professorships and seldom consider it as an option because research and publishing are considered as the core tasks of a university professorship.

5 www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/de/index/themen/15/06/data.html#Personal (in German)
**Didactic and function-related further training**

UAS have the task of supporting lecturers to be qualified for their functions in teaching and for performing their other range of tasks (applied research and development, further training, provision of services) and also for education management.

Further didactic and function-related training is explained in the recommendations of the Rectors’ Conference of the Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences (cf. to www.kfh.ch > Documents of the KFH > German > Best Practice KFH > Dozierende > Best Practice KFH: Weiterbildung Dozierende an FH – Konzept für die didaktische Weiterbildung):

Additional didactic trainings promote an institutional, integrated understanding of education and learning in the context of structural, pedagogical-conceptual and cultural conditions.

The function-related training promotes know-how and skills in the context of processes of organisational and quality development. Thus, further training makes a substantial contribution towards ensuring and further developing the quality of education and the university as well as positioning and recognising the UAS in a national and international context.

University-didactic centres were set up at six UAS. These UAS are in permanent contact to the further training managers of the UAS and to didactic centres at universities. Go to www.kfh.ch > Continuing education for lecturers where these centres are listed with their programs (e.g. Certificate Courses in Didactics).

**Family-friendliness at UAS**

Universities of applied sciences increasingly promote the compatibility of family and profession.

In a brochure ⁶ published by the Bern University of Applied Sciences and the University of Teacher Education Berne in 2011, activity fields and practical examples are given to help reconcile the demands of job and family. Thus, managers, lecturers and employees of UAS should receive ideas about how to further promote family-friendly structures at UAS.

**Child day care for UAS employees**

The number of child day care structures for UAS employees could be raised thanks to contribution by the federal program for equal opportunities for men and women at Swiss UAS. For more information on the subject, please contact the equal opportunity officers of the seven public UAS (page 12).

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(Report in German titled: Family Friendly at Universities. Suggestions for Directors and Employees. Published by the Berne University of Applied Sciences and the University of Teacher Education Berne, 2011)

www.bfh.ch/de/bfh/frauen-maenner/familienfreundlichkeit.html (in German and French)
VI. Requirements for UAS lecturers

Formal requirements for a UAS lectureship
The formal requirements for teaching as a UAS lecturer are defined in the Federal Law on the UAS from October 6, 1995 (active on January 1, 2007). Requirements:

- **A successfully completed university education** (university or UAS degree)
  The electing body may ignore this requirement under exceptional circumstances. Subject qualification must then be proven in another suitable manner.

- **Interest in research**
  In contrast to Germany, for instance, a doctorate or equivalent qualification is not a binding requirement for a UAS lectureship. All the same, a doctoral thesis or a similar research experience (experience in dealing with research projects) is more and more expected. In any case, interest in research should be present.

- **Didactic qualification**
  Didactic qualification is normally considered sufficient if teaching is required. Such experience may be earlier teaching practice at universities or in some professional training centres. In case of insufficient teaching experience, the Bern University of Applied Sciences, for instance, will require a candidate to do didactic training courses.

- **Several years of professional experience after the studies**
  Professional experiences must be logically related to the subject profile of the advertised lectureship. It is not defined how many years of professional experience outside university are required. Particularities of the biographies of women, such as family work, are also considered. The same goes for any activities requiring social skills, organisation ability and flexibility. However, it still varies to what extent extra-professional experiences are also considered as professional qualifications.

Non-formal requirements
Apart from the four formal requirements and the subject requirements, a UAS lectureship advertisement usually also calls for desired interpersonal skills and other, non-formal conditions.

The following interpersonal skills are particularly desired:

- Ability to be motivated
- Resilience
- Leadership qualities
- Communication skills
- Conceptual and visionary thinking
- Initiative
- Ability for innovation
- Team skills
- Entrepreneurial thinking

In addition, experience in project management and in acquiring funding as well as language skills (especially **English**) are greatly valued. The ability to teach courses also in English is expected more and more.
VII. Application and election procedures for a UAS lectureship

Written application
A written application for a UAS lectureship must follow the usual standards, just like any other application. Instructions for such can be found in every guideline. The following additional documents are also required for a lectureship application:

– List of publications, presentations, projects, competitions and exhibitions
  This list demonstrates the particular subject qualification.

– List of teaching experience
  If there is no or hardly any teaching experience, equivalent experiences in training or profession should be highlighted.

The appointment process (election procedures)
The appointment procedures vary greatly between different UAS. It is common for an employment of at least 50% and there are several steps to be followed. Generally, an appointment commission (Employment preparation commission) is set up to check incoming applications and make an appointment proposal. The employment act is carried out by the UAS or the UAS University Board. The procedure usually includes the following steps:

– Publication of a vacancy
– Checking of incoming applications by the appointment commission
– Invitation of selected candidates for an interview
– Selection of candidates for trial lessons
– If necessary, invitation of selected candidates for another interview
– Appointment proposal by the appointment commission
– Employment of the new lecturer by the UAS or the University Board

The interview
Interviews of the candidates by the appointment commission may differ greatly. For instance, questions may be asked concerning subject qualification, didactic concept, ideas, projects and cooperation in the field of research as well as questions on industry contacts. Usually, one may also expect questions on a willingness to participate in administrative functions.

Besides, it may also be inquired which courses candidates may teach and what their views are regarding the course offerings and departmental study design.

The trial lesson
The trial lesson has a large influence on the selection. It is advisable for best preparation to inquire from the head of the appointment commission what the requirements and expectations are, since they may vary from case to case.

Last, but not least
The requirements stipulated in a job advertisement may quickly cause candidates, particularly in the case of female candidates, to feel that their own abilities and experiences do not correspond to the requirements. However, potential candidates should not be discouraged from applying. Job advertisements often describe an ideal candidate. It is not necessarily expected of real candidates to fulfil all requirements. It is not uncommon that the profiles of appointed candidates differ substantially from these ideal profiles.
VIII. Promotion of young academics and doctorate studies

UAS are not only attractive employers for lecturers, but also for scientific collaborators. Scientific collaborators are distinguished from research assistants. The latter are usually employed after the end of their studies to participate in research and development. Their employment is time-limited. Scientific collaborators, on the other hand, usually come from the outside and provide extensive professional experience. They are usually employed without time limit. The emphasis of tasks for scientific collaborators lies in applied research and development, where they work at and manage projects. Other possible activities lie in the ranges of knowledge transfer and further training. If capable, they may also teach individual courses. Scientific collaborators may do further training and, if the requirements are met (see below), they may also write a PhD.

A PhD provides opportunities in many professional domains. When applying for a UAS lectureship, it is a very convincing and complete proof of research interest and experience. By providing a PhD, UAS lecturers also comply with the wish of the Rectors’ Conference of the Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences to obtain more knowledge and experience in theories and research methods than is usually the case in the framework of a first university degree (Bachelor or Master). Even though a PhD is not a condition required by law for a UAS lecturer, it is still an advantage in an application and it is often considered as a condition.

Although UAS cannot confer PhD titles, suitable PhD topics may be developed within the field of application-centred research and development. A precondition is that a professor of a traditional university is prepared to oversee the PhD process. Two examples are the Conferral Model of the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts (HSLU) and the Graduate School of the Arts of the Bern University of Applied Sciences and the University of Berne.

The HSLU employs suitable graduates of universities as scientific collaborators. A part of the employment is for teaching; the remainder is left for the PhD. Both parts together do not provide a 100% employment, as it is expected that PhD students have a personal interest in obtaining a PhD and therefore use their own private time to work on their thesis. Thus, the employment at the School of Business at the HSLU is usually kept at 70%.

The Graduate School of the Arts is a shared institute of the philosophical-historical faculty of the University of Bern and the Department Bern University of the Arts of the Bern University of Applied Sciences. It is an interdisciplinary PhD program which is open to researcher-artists (of UAS) as well as for (university) research fellows with an interest in applied sciences. In the Graduate School of the Arts, PhD students realise their own projects in a stimulating context which is integrated in scientific and artistic networks. PhD students profit from synergies between both universities and may develop specific skills which combine the strengths of both.

Both examples may be of interest particularly for PhD students who are aspiring to become UAS lecturers. Thus, they may get to know the structure and culture of the UAS, receive some teaching and research experience in an application-centred field and build up a network of contacts.

7 Go to www.kfh.ch > Documents of the KFH > German > Best Practice KFH > Dozierende > Mittelbau - Nachwuchsplanung Dozierende
9 Go to www.hkb.bfh.ch > Studies > Graduate School of the Arts
IX. **Relevant UAS links, legal foundations and addresses**

### Web addresses of Swiss institutions in the area of education and research

- **www.opet.admin.ch**
  The Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET) is the competence centre of the Swiss government in questions of professional education, Universities of Applied Sciences and Innovation.

- **www.kfh.ch**
  The Rectors’ Conference of the Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences (KFH) is the conference of the rectors of eight of the nine Swiss UAS established by the government. The KFH represents the interests of the UAS towards the federal government and the cantons, educational and research-related political institutions and the general public.

- **www.kti.admin.ch**
  The Commission for Technology and Innovation (CTI) promotes common research projects of UAS and the economy by financing the salaries of the research staff. In place of the federal government for the promotion of innovation in the economy, it supports application-centred research and development, entrepreneurial spirit and the promotion of start-up enterprises. Equipped with topic-centered and regional networks and platforms, it helps to optimise knowledge and technology transfer.

### Selected law foundations

- **www.bfh.ch/services/rechtsdienst/grundlagen** (in German / French)
  This website contains the following law foundations on the Swiss UAS generally and the Bern University of Applied Sciences in particular:
  - Bundesgesetz über die Fachhochschulen, 6 October 1995 (dated 1st January 2007)
  - Gesetz über die Berner Fachhochschule, 19 June 2003
  - Verordnung über die Berner Fachhochschule, 4 May 2004
  - Statut der Berner Fachhochschule, 1st August 2011

### Other web addresses on university didactics

- **www.bfh.ch/hdel** (in German and French)
  Didactic courses for teaching staff at Bern University of Applied Sciences

- **pages.unibas.ch/lehre/didaktik_kurs.html** (in German)
  Didactic courses for teaching staff at the University of Basel

- **www.didactica.ethz.ch** (in German)
  Didactic further training at university level by the University of Zurich and the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH)

- **www.unifr.ch/didactic** (in French)
  Modular complementary study at the University of Fribourg in tertiary teaching, adult education and new technologies in teaching

### Other selected web addresses

- **www.gendercampus.ch**
  The Gender Campus pages provide information from the areas of gender studies and equal opportunity at universities and UAS.

- **www.fachhochschuldozentin.ch** (in German)
  Website for the «More Female Lecturers at the University of Eastern Switzerland» project.
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August 2012
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