

Open, transparent and merit-based recruitment of researchers

(OTM-R) POLICY

By ensuring that the best person for the job is recruited, open, transparent and merit-based recruitment of researchers (OTM-R) improves the effectiveness of national research systems, guarantees equality, especially for under-represented groups, and boosts transand international co-operation. This in turn promotes optimal circulation of scientific knowledge.

Individual researchers, research performing organizations, research funders, and ultimately the whole European Research Area (ERA), benefit from OTM-R, which represents the main pillar of the European Charter for Researchers and, obviously, the Code of Conduct for their recruitment.

Open, transparent and merit-based recruitment (OTM-R) brings benefits to researchers, institutions, a country's research system, contributes to the full implementation of the European Research Area (ERA) and to an increase in the cost-effectiveness of investments in research. More specifically, OTM-R ensures that the best person for the job is recruited, guarantees equal opportunities and access for all, facilitates developing an international portfolio (cooperation, competition, mobility) and makes research careers more attractive.

General Principles and Requirements for the Code of Conduct

Recruitment

Employers and/or funders should establish recruitment procedures which are open, efficient, transparent, supportive and internationally comparable, as well as tailored to the type of positions advertised.

Advertisements should give a broad description of knowledge and competencies required, and should not be so specialised as to discourage suitable applicants. Employers should include a description of the working conditions and entitlements, including career development prospects. Moreover, the time allowed between the advertisement of the vacancy or the call for applications and the deadline for reply should be realistic.

Selection

Selection committees should bring together diverse expertise and competences and should have an adequate gender balance and, where appropriate and feasible, include members from different sectors (public and private) and disciplines, including from other countries and with relevant experience to assess the candidate. Whenever possible, a wide range of selection practices should be used, such as external expert assessment and face-to-face interviews. Members of selection panels should be adequately trained.

Transparency

Candidates should be informed, prior to the selection, about the recruitment process and the selection criteria, the number of available positions and the career development prospects. They should also be informed after the selection process about the strengths and weaknesses of their applications.

Judging merit

The selection process should take into consideration the whole range of experience of the candidates. While focusing on their overall potential as researchers, their creativity and level of independence should also be considered.

This means that merit should be judged qualitatively as well as quantitatively, focusing on outstanding results within a diversified career path and not only on the number of publications. Consequently, the importance of bibliometric indices should be properly balanced within a wider range of evaluation criteria, such as teaching, supervision, teamwork, knowledge transfer, management of research and innovation and public awareness activities. For candidates from an industrial background, particular attention should be paid to any contributions to patents, development or inventions.

Variations in the chronological order of CVs

Career breaks or variations in the chronological order of CVs should not be penalised, but regarded as an evolution of a career, and consequently, as a potentially valuable contribution to the professional development of researchers towards a multidimensional career track. Candidates should therefore be allowed to submit evidence-based CVs, reflecting a representative array of achievements and qualifications appropriate to the post for which application is being made.

Recognition of mobility experience

Any mobility experience, e.g. a stay in another country/region or in another research setting (public or private) or a change from one discipline or sector to another, whether as part of the initial research training or at a later stage of the research career, or virtual mobility experience, should be considered as a valuable contribution to the professional development of a researcher.

Recognition of qualifications

Employers and/or funders should provide for appropriate assessment and evaluation of the academic and professional qualifications, including nonformal qualifications, of all researchers, in particular within the context of international and professional mobility. They should inform themselves and gain a full understanding of rules, procedures and standards governing the recognition of such qualifications and, consequently, explore existing national law, conventions and specific rules on the recognition of these qualifications through all available channels

Seniority

The levels of qualifications required should be in line with the needs of the position and not be set as a barrier to entry. Recognition and evaluation of qualifications should focus on judging the achievements of the person rather than his/her circumstances or the reputation of the institution where the qualifications were gained. As professional qualifications may be gained at an early stage of a long career, the pattern of lifelong professional development should also be recognised.

Postdoctoral appointments

Clear rules and explicit guidelines for the recruitment and appointment of postdoctoral researchers, including the maximum duration and the objectives of such appointments, should be established by the institutions appointing postdoctoral researchers. Such guidelines should take into account time spent in prior postdoctoral appointments at other institutions and take into consideration that the postdoctoral status should be transitional, with the primary purpose of providing additional professional development opportunities for a research career in the context of longterm career prospects.

Recruitment at the University of Lodz

The University of Lodz established open, transparent and merit-based recruitment of researchers

1. In accordance with §164(1) of the Statute of the University of Lodz adopted by the Resolution of the Senate of the University of Lodz No. 440 of 27 May 2019, as amended ([Link - https://baw.uni.lodz.pl/d/9847/5/](https://baw.uni.lodz.pl/d/9847/5/)) a recruitment process for the position of researcher at the University of Lodz is announced by the rector at the request of the dean or the head of a university-wide, interfaculty or non-faculty unit after obtaining the opinion of a relevant council, if the unit has a council.
2. §165(1) of the Statute of the University of Lodz adopted by the Resolution of the Senate of the University of Lodz No. 440 of 27 May 2019, as amended (Link - <https://baw.uni.lodz.pl/d/9847/5/>) stipulates the method of appointing a selection committee for competition proceedings for the position of researcher. Specialists from the Employee Affairs Department of the University of Lodz have the responsibility to ensure the proper supervision of the selection committee appointment process.
3. §165 (2)-(7) of the Statute of the University of Lodz, adopted by Resolution of the Senate of the University of Lodz No. 440 of 27 May 2019, as amended (Link - <https://baw.uni.lodz.pl/d/9847/5/>) defines the composition of the competition committee and its rules for competition proceedings for the position of researcher.
4. Candidates aspiring to be employed as researchers at the University of Lodz can access information regarding the ongoing competition proceedings from the following sources:
 - on the University's website under the "Careers" tab (<https://www.uni.lodz.pl/kariera/>),
 - in the Public Information Bulletin of the University of Lodz under the "Job Offers" tab (<https://www.bip.uni.lodz.pl/oferty-pracy/>),
 - in the Public Information Bulletin of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education - Academic Announcements Database (<https://bazaogloszen.nauka.gov.pl/>)
 - on the European Commission's EURAXESS website (<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/>).
5. Job offers for researcher positions at the University of Lodz are published on the above-mentioned national websites in Polish and in English. On the Euraxess portal, the offers are published only in English.
6. The specialists from the University of Lodz's Employee Affairs Department is responsible for posting job offers for researcher positions on all of the aforementioned websites.
7. In accordance with Article 119 (3) of the Act on Higher Education and Science of 20.07.2018 (Dz.U. - Journal of Laws of 2018, item 1668, as amended) job offers for positions of researchers at the University of Lodz are published on all the aforementioned websites within 30 days prior to the competition.
8. At the University of Lodz, job offers for the position of researchers are prepared and published following a structured framework that includes the following information:
 - name of unit/place of work,
 - position and employee group,
 - number of vacancies (obligatory if more than 1),
 - FTE,
 - type of contract,

- offer announcement date,
 - deadline for submission of applications,
 - scientific discipline,
 - link to the university's website,
 - additional information (e.g., on how to submit applications and the entity's address information),
 - keywords,
 - description of the requirements for the candidate(s),
 - list of required documents,
 - anticipated date of settlement of the competition,
 - other additional information (e.g., regarding the interview, travel reimbursement, etc.).
9. Candidates interested in employment at the University of Lodz for positions of researchers are provided with the opportunity to electronically submit their application documents for specific competitions through the e-mail address specified in the job advertisement, as well as directly via the University of Lodz website and the University of Lodz Public Information Bulletin, utilizing the designated "Apply" or "Apply for a position" form. In addition, the "Apply"/"Apply for a position" form is also available in English.
10. According to §164 (3) of the Statute of the University of Lodz adopted by the Resolution of the Senate of the University of Lodz No. 440 of 27 May 2019, as amended (Link - <https://baw.uni.lodz.pl/d/9847/5/>) job offers for positions of researchers at the University of Lodz in particular specify the: requirements for the applicant/candidate, along with a list of the necessary documents confirming the fulfillment of these requirements and the necessary documents for the proper conduct of the competition process, deadline for the submission of documents and the deadline for the settlement of the competition.
11. The requirements for candidates applying for positions of researchers at the University of Lodz are detailed in:
- The Statute of the University of Lodz adopted by the Resolution of the Senate of the University of Lodz No. 440 of 27 May 2019, as amended. Link - <https://baw.uni.lodz.pl/d/9847/5/>
 - Regulation No. 58 of the Rector of the University of Lodz dated 20.12.2019, as amended, on the determination of detailed criteria for the evaluation of scientific and teaching achievements required for the employment of university teachers at the position of university professor and the position of assistant professor. Link - <https://baw.uni.lodz.pl/d/21362/5/>
12. §165(1) (6) of the Statute of the University of Lodz adopted by the Resolution of the Senate of the University of Lodz No. 440 of 27 May 2019, as amended (Link - <https://baw.uni.lodz.pl/d/9847/5/>) provides for an opportunity for the selection committee to interview each candidate about their achievements and intentions for the position. The commission shall notify the candidate of the place and date of the interview by e-mail at least seven days in advance. Interviews of the selection committees with candidates are organized at the University of Lodz in two forms: on-site and online
13. In §165(1) (7) the selection committee has been obligated to compile a comprehensive protocol of the recruitment process, encompassing essential elements such as justification and conclusions. The application for employment of a candidate designated by the selection committee is additionally subject to the opinion of the unit council (e.g., the faculty council), if the unit has such a council.

14. In accordance with Article 119 3 of the Act on Higher Education and Science of 20.07.2018 (Dz.U. - Journal of Laws of 2018, item 1668, as amended), information on the competition outcomes, along with the corresponding justifications, are disclosed within 30 days of the competition's conclusion and made available on the University of Lodz website, as well as in the Public Information Bulletin of the University of Lodz and the Public Information Bulletin of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education - Academic Announcements Database.
15. The competition committees are required address all inquiries from candidates, irrespective of their selection outcome for employment at the University.

The University of Lodz demonstrates its commitment to promoting diversity in experience, qualifications, and gender balance among competition committee members, while equipping them with the knowledge and tools necessary to conduct an open, substantive, and transparent recruitment process.

With great diligence, the University of Lodz ensures the proper dissemination of information regarding the recruitment process, selection criteria, and available positions, while also striving to inform candidates about professional development prospects and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their applications, taking into account both the university's capabilities and the needs of the candidates.

At the University of Lodz, it is advisable to consider the creativity and level of independence of candidates for positions of researchers, assessing their merits in a qualitative and quantitative manner. This evaluation should go beyond the mere quantity of publications and also emphasize exceptional achievements attained throughout their diverse academic journey.

It is recommended to strive for a balanced approach that encompasses a wider set of evaluation criteria, including teaching, scientific mentoring, teamwork, knowledge transfer, research management, and engagement in innovation and promoting scientific awareness within society, alongside the consideration of bibliometric indicators. Furthermore, special attention should be given to candidates with experience in the industrial sector, specifically focusing on their contributions to patents, developments, or inventions.

At the University of Lodz, it is advised that when evaluating the potential of candidates for positions of researchers, any career breaks or deviations from a chronological order in their curriculum vitae should not be criticized, but rather recognized as a part of their career evolution, and potentially viewed as valuable contributions to the professional development of researchers.

When assessing the potential of candidates for positions of researchers at the University of Lodz, it is recommended to consider mobility experiences (such as residence in another country/region or exposure to different research environments in the public or private sector), as well as instances of disciplinary or sectoral transitions during their academic career, recognizing them as valuable contributions to their professional development as researchers.

At the University of Lodz, it is recommended to appropriately assess the professional and academic qualifications, as well as informal qualifications, of candidates for positions of researchers, placing special emphasis on their international and professional mobility experiences, during the process of recognition and evaluation.

To facilitate this process, it is advisable to share available information and acquire relevant details through the available communication channels concerning the rules, procedures, and standards governing the recognition of such qualifications, and consequently to utilize the applicable national laws, conventions, and specific regulations regarding the recognition of these qualifications.

It is recommended that at the University of Lodz, in the process of evaluating candidates/candidates for positions of academic teachers, their qualifications should be assessed according to the needs of the position

for which they are candidates.

Hence, it is recommended to prioritize the evaluation of a candidate's achievements rather than their circumstances or reputation acquired from the institution where they obtained their qualifications.

Furthermore, it is advised that when assessing candidates with extensive scientific careers, their professional qualifications acquired during the early stages of their careers should also be considered, taking into account the trajectory of their entire career up to the present.

To enhance the hiring process of candidates with doctoral degrees for academic teaching positions, the University of Lodz is advised to implement clear rules, while also striving to provide employment stability and fostering opportunities for career advancement.