

Leiden University

Guidelines for the Appointment of Academic Staff

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Leiden University Guidelines for the Appointment of Academic Staff

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1. Introduction

The Leiden University Guidelines for the Appointment of Academic Staff have provided the general framework for the University’s career policy since 2007. In 2013 a themed meeting about staffing policy was held, attended by all the Faculty Boards and Scientific Directors of the institutes. It was discovered that everyone present felt strongly that the University’s staffing policy for academic staff needed a ‘rethink’. This resulted in the creation of the Career Policy for Academic Staff steering group, which in 2014 issued an advisory report on changes to the University’s staffing policy with regard to the recruitment, selection and promotion of academic staff. A second themed meeting revealed that there was broad support for the steering group’s recommendations. The steering group’s advisory report was discussed in various bodies, including the University Council, after which it was adopted without alteration by the Executive Board. It now forms the basis for these amended Guidelines for Appointment of Academic Staff.

The immediate reason for rethinking the career policy was the need to give the academic staff’s performance in teaching and teaching development a more emphatic role in decision-making

about careers. A second reason was that in two successive Staff Monitors, teachers (*docenten*) and university lecturers (*universitair docenten*) had rated their career prospects as only moderate. Analysis of the existing practices also revealed that the Guidelines had not been fully elaborated in all areas: criteria for decision-making about careers were sometimes found to be unclear. In some important aspects, discrepancies were found between rules and policy on the one hand and their implementation in practice on the other.

In § 2 of the new Guidelines, a general framework is formulated. Naturally, this general framework can be elaborated in more detail by the individual faculties, although this elaboration must fit within the University-wide framework and must also conform to the University Job Classification (UFO) system specified in the Collective Labour Agreement (CAO) of Dutch Universities. The common thread running through the Guidelines continues to be that, apart from specific exceptions or groups of exceptions, all the tenured academic staff positions (professors, senior university lecturers, university lecturers) must encompass the combination of teaching and research.

In § 3 a number of specific rules are elaborated for each job category. Here too, there is scope for more detailed elaboration by the individual faculties.

§ 4 describes how the Executive Board intends to implement these Guidelines. An important aspect of this will be a periodic inventory of potential talent within the academic staff ('fleet review'). A few faculties, institutes or departments already use a fleet review, but the intention is that this will take place everywhere. The appendix contains an example for the design of a fleet review. Finally, the faculties are asked to indicate in their budget how they will implement the new staffing policy in their staff planning.

These Guidelines are applicable for all job categories of academic staff except PhD candidates, i.e. researchers/postdocs, teachers (*docenten*), university lecturers (*universitair docenten*), senior university lecturers (*universitair hoofddocenten*) and professors (*hoogleraren*).

2. General principles

a. Combination of teaching and research

Academic staff with tenure engage in both research and teaching. Academic staff who (mainly) engage in just one of these core tasks (researchers/postdocs, teachers) will usually have a temporary appointment.

A faculty must have the Executive Board's consent to offer tenured appointments to staff who are mainly responsible for just one core task (e.g. teachers). If necessary, a faculty can also make a reasoned request for consent for a specific category of staff.

Explanation

Academic staff members who are responsible for independently providing academic teaching and conducting academic research in a faculty together constitute the tenured academic staff (professors, senior university lecturers, university lecturers). A common characteristic of these positions is that providing academic teaching and conducting academic research are combined. This integration of research and teaching is designated as one of the University's core values in our new strategic plan.

In addition, these staff members also perform tasks in the area of management and/or administration. The actual proportion of time spent on the different core tasks of the University can vary, but the requirement of this combination will remain in effect over the years.

Academic staff members who are mainly responsible for just one of the core tasks, either providing academic teaching (teacher position) or conducting academic research (researcher) will in principle have a temporary appointment. Exceptions to this – for individuals or for a specific group – require the Executive Board's consent.

The rules in the Guidelines have not changed. However, in accordance with the steering group's advisory report, the intention is that the *implementation practice* will change, as regards staff with an exclusively teaching appointment (teachers). On the one hand, the intention is to reduce the number of these teachers, and on the other hand the appointment criteria have been tightened (see § 3 subsection a below).

b. PhD as the basis for an academic career

Academic staff members have a PhD. Faculties can diverge from this principle to a limited extent in the case of temporary teachers. Other exceptions will require the Executive Board's permission on an individual basis.

Explanation

An individual will not be appointed as a university lecturer, senior university lecturer or professor if they do not have a PhD. In principle, teachers with tenure must also have a PhD. If a faculty wishes to offer tenured appointments to academic staff who do not have a PhD, it must request the Executive Board's consent on an individual basis.

It should be noted that this rule has been adopted without alteration from the previous Guidelines. However, making reference to the University's ambition that the role of research in its teaching should be even greater than in the past, the Career Policy for Academic Staff steering group underlined the importance of this rule, and also of its enforcement.

c. Competitive selection and experience requirements

The basic principle is that vacancies for academic positions will be filled on the basis of an open recruitment and selection procedure. Vacancies must be advertised at least on the University website and optionally also via other internal and external channels.

Faculties can diverge from this principle in the case of temporary positions for PhD candidates, teachers and researchers/postdocs. University lecturers must always be appointed on the basis of an open procedure, unless a candidate has been awarded a personal grant from the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) or from the EU (ERC grant).

The principle of open recruitment also applies for senior university lecturer and professor positions, with the proviso that

- **open recruitment is not required for appointments that arise from a tenure track appointment or a similar career development agreement, nor in other individual cases where the Executive Board has given prior permission for a ‘fast-track procedure’ for the appointment of a professor;**
- **open recruitment is not required in the case of internal promotion of a university lecturer to the position of senior university lecturer.**

When an individual is appointed to an academic position, the requirements of the position must be fulfilled (within the framework of the University Job Classification (UFO) profile, University guidelines and Faculty guidelines). A basic principle for tenured appointment is that experience must also have been gained outside of Leiden University. This can be either academic experience in another university, or practical experience outside the academic world.

Explanation

It is evident from the rankings and other sources that Leiden University’s academics give a top quality performance, from Dutch, European and global perspectives. The new institutional plan 2015-2020 is ambitious with regard to attracting academics: the University aims to continue to attract the best academics to Leiden. Competitive selection is essential for this.

The basic principle of recruitment based on competitive selection was already laid down in the previous Guidelines and also in the Leiden University Regulations on Filling of Vacancies 2014. However, it was observed by the Career Policy for Academic Staff steering group that in practice the recruitment of academic staff is often not based on competitive selection. The steering group advises that the rules regarding (open) recruitment should be enforced more strictly, and the central principle should be that tenured appointment as an academic staff member can only be granted if the candidate has been selected in a procedure of open competition.

The new Guidelines have been formulated in accordance with this principle. The rules for tenured

positions (and positions that are usually a step on the way to tenured employment) are now formulated in more binding terms. At the same time, however, the Guidelines offer more scope than the previous version for making certain short-term appointments without an extensive selection procedure. That scope already existed for PhD candidates, and has now also been created for teachers and researchers / postdocs. These categories can – if there is a reason for this – be appointed without competitive selection, for instance in the case of ‘peak-time’ teachers who need to be deployed quickly or if a vacancy is part of a project with national or EU research funding (‘2nd or 3rd source of funding’), for which a suitable candidate is available or has even already been included in the external assessment.

The steering group also proposed that experience as an academic outside of Leiden University in the Netherlands or abroad should become a condition for tenured appointment, because mobility, including international mobility, contributes to an academic’s success and is therefore in the interest of both the individual personally and the University. When preparing the new Guidelines, the Executive Board noted that there was broad support for this proposal, but that its implementation in practice involves too many complications to make a hard-and-fast rule on this point. It therefore decided on formulation in the form of a principle, the application of which can be interpreted in more detail at the faculty level.

d. Recruitment and selection procedures

Recruitment and selection are subject to the Leiden University Regulations on Filling of Vacancies.

Explanation

The Regulations on Filling of Vacancies stipulate – in addition to the principle of competitive selection discussed under the previous point of these Guidelines – a number of aspects of staffing policy that are also relevant for the appointment of academic staff, such as the procedure for redeployment candidates and career development agreements, the composition of selection advice committees and the target group policy.

e. P&D Interviews

All staff members have a Performance and Development Interview at least once a year, in accordance with the Leiden University Regulations on Performance and Development Interviews.

Explanation

The annual Performance and Development Interview (P&D Interview) is a review of the performance and development over the past year, and these are recorded in an assessment. Agreements for the forthcoming period are also made and recorded in this interview, concerning both performance and development (in the current position or possibly in a different position). A

P&D Interview is a precondition for granting a tenured appointment, a promotion and special remunerations, such as extra periodic salary increments and bonuses. For appointment to a tenured position and promotion to a higher scale / position, it will obviously be essential that the performance assessment fulfils the requirements in all respects (core tasks of teaching and research). In the case of a promotion, the P&D Interview must demonstrate that the individual concerned exceeds the requirements of the current position, before promotion can take place.

f. Teaching qualifications

All university staff members with a teaching role must have one or more teaching qualifications.

Explanation

PhD candidates and staff members who are starting a teaching role and whose appointment is for less than 1 year and 0.5 FTE are expected to successfully complete a course in basic didactic skills that is tailored to their specific teaching role. They will be asked to complete this course as far as possible before the start of their teaching role.

The (nationally specified¹) Basic Teaching Qualification (BKO) is mandatory for all professors, senior university lecturers, university lecturers and teachers whose appointment at Leiden University is for at least 1 year and for at least 0.5 FTE. They must obtain the Basic Teaching Qualification certificate no more than 2 years after starting their employment, and will only be eligible for a tenured position or promotion to a higher position if they have this certificate.

The Senior Teaching Qualification (SKO) is a qualification for academic staff members who have a role in further development and innovation of teaching at a higher level than their own discipline. At Leiden University, this qualification is only mandatory for individuals who are promoted from university lecturer to senior university lecturer mainly by virtue of excellent teaching performance (see § 3 subsection d).

With the exception of the mandatory Senior Teaching Qualification for university lecturers who are promoted to senior university lecturer by virtue of teaching qualities (see § 3 d), this is also existing policy, which has now been incorporated in the Guidelines.

g. Gender diversity

Our aim is to encourage gender diversity up to the highest levels of the University, therefore we always try to ensure that the gender representation within a job group (such as senior university lecturers) is a reflection of the job group below (in this case, university lecturers). Faculties must take account of this in their recruitment and selection procedures.

¹ <http://vsnu.nl/docentkwaliteit.html>

Explanation

Academic research has shown that experiencing and increasing diversity in teams encourages excellence, academic advancement and innovation. Increasing diversity is therefore a core value of our university. The Executive Board adopted the Diversity Work Plan in September 2014. One of the points in this work plan is to encourage gender diversity at all job levels. Gender diversity in the various job categories is different in each faculty, but it can be said that the number of women in the highest positions is small. The faculties are currently taking new steps on the basis of the work plan. One of the University-wide objectives is to ensure that the male-female ratio within a job group is a reflection of the gender representation in the job group below. Where there is already a proportional ratio of female (master's) students, the standard gender balance guidelines are used (usually a ratio of at least 40% : 60%). One of the methods for achieving this is recruitment of new academic talent via open procedures (see also § 2 subsection c). Other methods for encouraging diversity are scouting of female talent and including a diversity expert in selection committees.

Diversity was not a topic in the previous Guidelines. However, in view of the University's diversity policy, it was obvious that diversity should be included in the Guidelines, especially since the Career Policy for Academic Staff steering group observed that women in university lecturer positions relatively often have a temporary contract, without a good explanation appearing to be evident for this. Faculties are asked to avoid this relative over-representation of women in temporary positions.

h. Staff planning and 'fleet review'

Faculties conduct an annual review of their staff ('fleet review'), to analyse the composition of their academic staff in terms of both quantity and quality, partly in the light of desired strategic developments.

The fleet review will, where necessary, result in promotions (within or outside of the University), development tracks or initiation of proposals for personal grants. The budget will include a summary of the desired future development in the numbers of jobs, broken down into job categories and types of appointment (tenured/temporary), together with an explanation.

Explanation

Academic talent is the heart of the University. Staffing policy is aimed at attracting and developing talent, and ensuring that staff enjoy their work in teaching and research. A fleet review contributes to the careful and well-structured implementation of staffing policy. Some faculties and institutes already conduct an annual fleet review; the Career Policy for

Academic Staff steering group advised that this should take place each year in all the faculties and institutes, and in an identifiable and structured way. This annual review must involve not only the obvious attention for ‘top talent’ but also attention for e.g. university lecturers who are regarded by the institute as exceeding the level of university lecturer.

A fleet review is conducted under the responsibility of the Faculty Board, and is intended to provide, in a systematic manner, an overview of:

- the desired development in the composition of the academic staff in terms of quantity and quality at the level of the separate institutes, taking account of – among other things – the financial developments;
- staff who (in the long term) are or could be eligible for a tenured position or promotion;
- potential candidates for a personal grant from the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) (Innovational Research Incentives Scheme) or from the EU (ERC grant);
- potential candidates for management positions;
- staff who should develop themselves or improve their performance in order to (continue to) fulfil the (changing) requirements of teaching and research in their discipline.

Another special point for attention here in relation to each of these aspects is gender diversity. The results of the fleet review will be discussed (in broad outlines) once a year between the Executive Board and the Faculty Board.

The Executive Board’s budget instructions include a format for the figures that the Faculty should include in the budget.

3. Specific stipulations for each jobcategory

a. Teachers

Teachers will usually have a temporary appointment.

Faculties will ensure that the number of teacher positions is reduced, in principle to the 2009 level (= University-wide 14% of the academic staff, excluding postdocs and PhD candidates).

For specific groups of teachers, (the prospect of) a tenured position is possible, with the Executive Board's consent; for this, at least the criteria listed in the explanation below will have to be fulfilled.

Explanation

A faculty must request the Executive Board's consent to offer tenured appointment to academic staff who are mainly responsible for just one core task (either teaching or research). If necessary, the faculty can also make a reasoned request for consent for a *category* of staff, such as teachers. Teachers in this category must fulfil at least the following cumulative criteria:

- the teacher has a PhD² and
- the teacher has a Basic Teaching Qualification, and
- the teacher is actively associated – in addition to his/her work at the University – with a practice that has added value for the teaching.

The criteria can be specified in more detail by the Faculty Board. Establishing the categories of teachers requires the Executive Board's consent. When the vacancy is opened, a determination will be made of whether the teacher position falls within an established category and whether (the prospect of) a tenured position is applicable.

Appointing teachers with a temporary contract is intended to accommodate temporary peaks in the teaching load, especially in the first and second years of the bachelor's phase. It is extremely important to assure the teaching quality. Teachers with a temporary contract are expected to either obtain the Basic Teaching Qualification or (in the case of appointments for less than 0.5 FTE or 1 year) at least to take an initial course in basic didactic skills, as far as possible before the start of their appointment.

The previous Guidelines did not have any specific rules for teachers. The appointment criteria are identical to the steering group's proposal.

² However, in specific cases (e.g. for language teachers) it is possible for a teacher to be given tenured appointment without applicability of the PhD requirement. In that case, the teacher will have the education & research support profile 'skills trainer'.

b. Researchers / Postdocs

Researchers without a teaching role or with a small teaching role will usually have a temporary appointment.

For specific groups of researchers, (the prospect of) a tenured position is possible, with the Executive Board's consent.

Explanation

The basic principle is that academic staff who mainly engage in just one task (either teaching or research) will not have tenured appointment. In practice, reasons for an exception will be less likely to occur in the case of research than in the case of teaching. Situations where a tenured position may be considered will especially occur in a few special institutes affiliated with the University (IIAS, ASC, CWTS) and if a researcher is involved with the infrastructure development of large facilities (Faculty of Science).

The Guidelines are unchanged with regard to researchers / postdocs, apart from small changes in the wording.

c. University lecturers

Appointment as a university lecturer is usually the start of a long-term academic career, with an equal combination of tasks in research and teaching. For this reason, vacancies for the position of university lecturer are always filled on the basis of open competition. The only exception to this policy is made for academics who have been awarded a personal grant from NWO or ERC. These academics may be appointed as university lecturers without undergoing the open recruitment procedure.

Explanation

A method for ensuring that only the best people receive an academic position within Leiden University is the principle that every member of the academic staff will have been selected in a competitive selection procedure at least once during his/her career at Leiden University. The most obvious time to require this is at the beginning of the academic career.

The procedure for obtaining a personal grant is extremely competitive. An academic who has successfully applied for such a grant may be appointed to the position of university lecturer without undergoing the open recruitment procedure. In order to justify this appointment, the grant must be at least at the level of a Vidi or ERC Starting Grant, or a comparable grant.

d. Senior university lecturers

A position as a senior university lecturer is usually a promotion position for a university lecturer. Senior university lecturers are usually recruited internally.

A promotion with the emphasis on teaching performance (excellent teaching, good research)

will take place on the basis of the University criteria listed below. A promotion with the emphasis on research performance (excellent research, good teaching) will take place on the basis of criteria to be established by the faculties, within the aspects specified in these Guidelines.

Explanation

Promotion of university lecturers to the level of senior university lecturer is possible in two situations. In the first situation, the university lecturer has shown that he/she possesses excellent *research* quality and (at least) good *teaching* quality. A number of aspects that are relevant in assessing the quality of research conducted by potential senior university lecturers are applicable University-wide. These aspects then form a framework for the specific appointment criteria for each faculty. The main aspects are the following:

- coordination of and responsibility for realisation of his/her own (innovative) research programme;
- excellent record of publications in leading journals or with leading publishing companies;
- involved as co-supervisor with several successful PhD completions;
- international prestige in his/her own discipline, as evidenced by invitations to be a guest lecturer or a (keynote) speaker at international conferences;
- regularly competing for acquisition of external research grants, resulting in excellent evaluations by peer reviewers or acquisition of grants.

A second situation in which a university lecturer can be promoted to senior university lecturer occurs if the university lecturer has shown that he/she has excellent *teaching* skills in combination with (at least) good *research* qualities. A university lecturer can be said to display excellent teaching performance if he/she:

- gives excellent teaching him/herself;
- plays an important role in curriculum development in terms of content, educational methods and organisation for (important parts of) a study programme (not only within his/her own discipline) and/or in the management of a study programme;
- plays a role in the area of educational leadership and teaching innovation.

This therefore also opens the possibility, in addition to the existing practice (promotion on the basis of the combination of excellent research and good/excellent teaching), of promotion to senior university lecturer on the basis of the combination of excellent teaching and good research. It has been decided to restrict this career step to the level of senior university lecturer. For promotion to or appointment as *professor*, excellent research performance – in addition to good or excellent teaching performance – will continue to be of decisive importance. A university lecturer who is promoted to senior university lecturer by virtue of excellent teaching skills must have the Senior Teaching Qualification (see § 2 subsection f).

The previous Guidelines did not have any specific rules for senior university lecturers. The appointment criteria are identical to the Career Policy for Academic Staff steering group's

proposal

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e. Tenure track

Tenure track can be used in some faculties as an instrument for attracting, developing and retaining talented academics. The final point of a tenure track is a professor position.

Opening of tenure track positions must take place on the basis of structured staff planning and within the legal status frameworks. The performance and development of individuals in a track will be regularly evaluated on the basis of pre-formulated criteria. The opinion of external referees will also be included in the final evaluation.

Explanation

Leiden University's policy with regard to tenure track has three basic principles:

- tenure track is aimed at top academics;
- entry is a temporary appointment of (maximum) 7 years, with the prospect of a tenured position (as senior university lecturer) if pre-formulated criteria are fulfilled;
- prospect of a position as professor.

The Guidelines have deliberately been formulated quite generally on this point, so that the faculties can formulate their own interpretation, taking account of their own specific context. A tenure track has a maximum period of 7 years. The track will be organised and made feasible within 6 years and will be carefully monitored. As a result, it will be possible to grant tenured appointment after 6 years in regular cases. If leave has been taken or other special circumstances have occurred, and it is expected that the track can be concluded successfully, the 7th year can be used. If it becomes evident from the dossier after 6 years, or earlier, that the track cannot lead to tenure, the employment contract can be prematurely terminated, with statement of the reasons.

Tenure track policy has had different interpretations in different places. The Faculty of Science has had a detailed and proven tenure track policy for many years. Some other faculties work with tenure track positions on an occasional basis. It is up to the faculties to decide the extent to which it is desirable to increase the number of tenure track positions, within the general framework of these Guidelines.

The previous version of the Guidelines did not contain any text concerning tenure track. That policy was established at a later date. The text of the Guidelines is identical to that established policy.

f. Professors

The Procedural Regulations on Establishing of Chairs and Appointment of Professors (2012)

and the Policy on Professors (2017) booklet are applicable for the appointment of professors.

Explanation

The chairs at Leiden University are classified under the position of Professor 2. When new professors are appointed, they are usually scaled as Professor 2. For the general description of the duties for the position of Professor 2, see the relevant job title in the University Job Classification (UFO) material, the assigned core activities and the classification criteria.

The Policy on Professors stipulates that positions are filled on the basis of open recruitment, unless agreements have been made with an individual in the context of tenure track. Recruitment will take place as far as possible in open competition. This will be implemented by means of simultaneous internal and external recruitment, usually both national and international. The Executive Board can occasionally give permission to vary from the principle of open recruitment. The reasons for this can be both the characteristics of the specific job market and specific reasons relating to the staffing policy.

The policy in terms of specific points for appointment and promotion of professors is set down in the Policy on Professors booklet.

4. Implementation and transitional measures

The implementation of these Guidelines needs a careful approach. The requirements stipulated in these Guidelines are applicable for employment contracts and agreements that are established after the adoption of these Guidelines. Existing contracts must be respected.

These Guidelines were discussed in the Governing Council meeting of 17 June 2015. After advice had been obtained from the University Council, the Guidelines were definitively adopted by the Executive Board as executive instructions to the faculties on 1 September 2015.

Revised by the Executive Board on 26 June 2018 (article 2c and 3c).