



# **OTM-R Policy at the University of Hradec Králové**

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## Introduction

In April 2020, the University of Hradec Králové (hereinafter referred to as the UHK) committed to implementing a human resources strategy to improve the working conditions of researchers in accordance with the [European Charter for Researchers](#) and the [Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers](#) (hereinafter referred to as the Charter and the Code). In November 2021, the UHK received the *HR Excellence in Research (HR Award)* which is awarded by the European Commission in the field of human resources. With this award, the UHK has confirmed its commitment to continuously strengthen and improve conditions in the field of human resources management.

In line with the HRD strategy, the UHK has identified the implementation of open, transparent and fair procedures in the recruitment and selection procedures for researchers (OTM-R policy) as a key area. The UHK will also apply this policy appropriately to the selection and recruitment procedures for non-researchers.

The OTM-R policy ensures equal opportunities for all persons applying for open competitions, facilitates the development of the international dimension of the institution and makes the positions of researchers more attractive.

## What does OTM-R mean?

The OTM-R is one of the pillars of the European Charter for Researchers and an integral part of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (hereafter referred to as the *Charter* and the *Code*).

The acronym stands for **O**pen, **T**ransparent and **M**erit-based **R**ecruitment. This acronym encapsulates the general principles of open, transparent and fair recruitment and selection procedures.

**Open:** The institution is obliged to advertise positions openly and with the aim of reaching as wide a range of candidates as possible.

**Transparent:** The recruitment process must be simple and transparent. External candidates must have the same access to information as internal candidates.

**Merit-based:** The selection of candidates must be results-based, in the sense of assessing the qualities and performance of candidates for the position.

## OTM-R policy attributes

**Open:** The recruitment and selection procedure is considered open if it is public and the widest possible target group is reached (availability to external candidates).

**Transparent:** A transparent selection procedure is one that is easily and clearly understood by all applicants and candidates and is defined in a publicly available institutional policy regarding selection procedures.

**Merit-based:** The selection of candidates is based on an impartial assessment of their careers, i.e. focusing on their previous experience, achievements and potential. This aspect allows the institution to recruit the most suitable person for the job advertised.

## OTM-R policy in the processes of the UHK

### What does the OTM-R policy mean in the context of current processes?

In general, these are recommended procedures for the recruitment of researchers (scientific and academic) at the UHK.

The OTM-R policy will be published on the UHK website (requirement of easy accessibility). It will contain the definition of the UHK practice in fulfilling the OTM-R criteria. The OTM-R policy covers the following areas:

- a) Clear and comprehensible information on the selection procedure, including information on the selection criteria and indicative deadlines;
- b) Posting of advertisements with links to detailed information, required competencies, working conditions and other employment and institutional opportunities (e.g., training opportunities, career development, equality plan, etc.);
- c) Ensuring that the required criteria are consistent with the nature of the advertised position, eliminating barriers for male and female candidates (e.g., not requiring excessive qualifications, not setting overly restrictive criteria);
- d) Minimising the administrative burden on candidates (translation of documents, number of copies, etc.);
- e) Revision of bilingualism (is the Czech language a requirement for the advertised position? If the vacancy is advertised in English, is the interview also conducted in English? Is sufficient language training provided for the members of the selection committees to conduct the interview in English? Etc.);

- f) Elaboration of a guide/methodology on these aspects.

## OTM-R policy system

### Selection and admission cycle

The OTM-R policies adopted by the UHK are structured around the key stages of recruitment. The key stages are developed within the cycle of the selection and recruitment process.

Announcement of the selection procedure	Selection procedure	Termination of the selection procedure
Announcement of a selection procedure for a job	Pre-selection based on meeting minimum criteria	Sending information on the end of the selection procedure
Publication and description of the job	Invitation to the selection procedure	Providing feedback to unsuccessful candidates
Specification of the job requirements	Interview with candidates	
Advertisements of the advertised job		

## 1. Announcement of the selection procedure

### 1.1 Call for a selective procedure for the job

Research, academic and other positions should be formally advertised according to the established criteria of the OTM-R policy and in accordance with the internal regulations ([Code of Procedure for Selection of Academicians and Managerial Employees of the University of Hradec Králové](#)) and other documents of the UHK.<sup>1</sup>

The recruitment process begins at the moment a vacancy/position is identified to be filled. In line with the principles of transparency and openness, the steps of the process will be clearly set out so that they are accessible to all candidates.

<sup>1</sup> Changes and additions will be made in this area to include current/updated materials to ensure that all materials to be considered are current and available in one place.

## 1.2 Publication and job description

The job offer will be formulated as clearly, understandably and concisely as possible in accordance with the OTM-R policy. The offer should include the following elements to allow candidates to become adequately acquainted with the job and the institution, as well as with the selection procedure.

Job postings will provide this information directly in the advertisement or will include links to where this information is available.

In order to ensure the transparency of vacancies advertised, advertisers will be given access to a standardised template for advertising vacancies. It will contain the following information:

- Job title/job classification (function);
- Research profile (R1-R4);
- Indication of the university unit and the specific department;
- Method of employment establishing (employment contract/appointment);
- Scope of employment/work load;
- Duration of the employment;
- Place of work;
- Estimated date of the job start;
- Job description;
- Minimum education requirements, work experience and competences required;
- Information on benefits provided by the UHK;
- Closing date of the selection procedure and deadline for applications;
- Documents required from applicants;
- Contact details for enquiries;
- Link to the unit/workplace;
- Link to the declaration on the processing of personal data by the UHK;
- Further information.

In order to reduce the administrative burden, application materials are preferred in electronic form (the specific form of delivery of the required materials must be specified in the published job offer). The originals of these documents are requested only from persons who receive an offer of employment.

### 1.3 Specification of job requirements

The specification of the requirements for the job (or of a person who is the ideal candidate for the job) is thoroughly described so as to avoid any possible discrimination throughout the selection procedure. Candidates are assessed on the basis of the specific requirements formulated for the particular job.

A well-elaborated requirements specification:

- Helps to preserve objectivity, eliminate prejudice and discrimination;
- Provides clear criteria for shortlisting candidates;
- Helps potential applicants to assess whether they have the qualifications and skills required to fill the position;
- Will enable more effective advertising;
- Generates interview questions;
- Provides structured feedback to unsuccessful applicants;
- Allows for the review of any complaints from unsuccessful candidates.

Characteristics of the requirements specification:

- Minimum education and work experience requirements;
- Identification of key competences from the job/position description;
- Putting the key competences thus identified in the context of the job/position;
- Determination of the level of the competencies (quality, quantity) where possible;
- Indication of other required skills and knowledge needed to perform the job/position, if applicable;
- Elimination of requirements for qualifications that are not necessary for the job/position;
- In specifying the requirements, making a distinction between the qualifications or skills that candidates should already have before starting he job and those that they can learn later;
- Establishment of a system for verification of compliance with attributes that determine no acceptance/acceptance, e.g., interview questions, certificates, presentations by candidates, etc.;
- Careful formulation of minimum requirements and desirable skills to avoid unintentional barriers;
- Not too narrow description of the required knowledge and skills so as not to discourage suitable candidates;

- Storing of defined specifications for feedback and analytical purposes.

## 1.4 Advertisement of the vacancy

Openness and transparency are key aspects in the publication of jobs and positions. All selection procedures for research, scientific and academic positions are compulsorily open, thus meeting the requirements of equal opportunities.

Job vacancy advertisements will always be placed on the UHK website (possibly also on social networks). Vacancies for scientific, research and development positions (R1-R4<sup>2</sup> according to the classification) will also be advertised in English on the Euraxess portal. If the workplace requests advertising on other sites or platforms (e.g., ResearchJobs, ResearchGate), these requests can be made in the internal selection procedure form.

It is recommended that the call for R1 - R4 positions, including senior positions, should always be published in the public section of the website (or Euraxess) at least 30 calendar days before the closing date for applications. The posting must specify the conditions, the method of submission and the closing date for applications. For positions outside the above, it is recommended that positions be advertised for a minimum of 14 calendar days, ideally at least 21 calendar days.

The selection procedure need not be called and advertised in the following cases:

- If an employment contract is made with an employee repeatedly in order to fill the position held by her/him;
- If the applicant for the post of an academician is a person with exceptional scientific erudition and the dean of the faculty has decided on the basis of Section 77(1) of the Act to fill the position without a selection procedure after the prior approval of the Rector;
- If the position is that of an academician who is to work at a higher education institute and the Rector has decided to fill the position without a selection procedure on the basis of Section 77(1) of the Act;
- In the case of the posts of extraordinary and visiting professors.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/europe/career-development/training-researchers/research-profiles-descriptors>



## **2. Selection procedure**

Applications for the advertised position may be submitted in the form specified in the advertised competition. In order to reduce the administrative burden on applicants, the electronic form is preferred.

### **2.1 Pre-selection based on meeting minimum criteria**

Before the selection committee evaluates the applications of candidates, the applications will be checked after the closing date for applications to determine whether they candidates are eligible to be admitted to the selection procedure.

If, after the closing date for the submission of applications, missing documents or other missing information are discovered during a check, candidates will be asked to complete them within 3 calendar days of the call being sent. In case of non-completion of the required information, these applications will not be accepted for shortlisting.

#### **Shortlisting**

Shortlisting means the process by which candidates are assessed on the basis of the job specification (see 1.3) and the evaluation of the documents received from the candidates. The shortlisting of candidates takes place as soon as possible after the closing date for applications. The shortlisting criteria are based on an analysis of the documents submitted by the candidates (qualifications, experience supported by a CV, references, etc.). At the shortlisting stage, individual applications are compared against the pre-defined criteria, see point 1.3. Individual criteria may have different weightings in the evaluation itself but the defined evaluation system must be communicated to all shortlisting evaluators. Discussions or evaluations by members of the selection committee (or other persons participating in the selection procedure) are always confidential.

The shortlisted candidates may only be excluded on the basis of criteria and requirements assessed and relevant to the job. All members of the selection committee must be made aware of the requirement of confidentiality and the obligation to protect personal data.

### **2.2 Invitation to tender**

All candidates who meet the formal requirements for the position will receive an email confirming that their application has been accepted for the selection procedure and will be provided with further information on the recruitment process and an indicative schedule. Applicants who have not been shortlisted will be informed of their non-acceptance. In the event of a request for feedback,

applicants will be provided with a clear and comprehensive explanation of why they were not selected. Emails will be sent to all (un)successful candidates within 3 working days of the completion of the shortlisting process.

## 2.3 Interviewing candidates

All candidates will be sent an e-mail inviting them to an interview (in the event of reasons limiting the physical possibility of attending, such as distance, illness or financial constraints, the interview may be conducted by means of distance communication). The invitation must be sent in sufficient time to allow the candidates to prepare adequately for the interview, ideally at least 5 working days before the interview.

The invitation to the interview includes:

- The date, time and place of the interview (in the case of remote communication, a reference to the meeting, a telephone number or other relevant information depending on the form of the interview);
- The duration of the interview;
- Information on the members of the selection committee;
- Details of the required materials, e.g., presentations, portfolio, etc.;
- A request to communicate specific requirements of the interviewee for the interview (e.g., wheelchair access, assistance with the building entry, access with an assistance dog, etc.).

Internal and external candidates should not be invited separately if time permits. The job description and the requirements for candidates must make it clear what will be the subject of the interview (e.g., level of skills required, knowledge test).

Prior to the interview as such, members of the selection committee will be provided with a comprehensive set of materials providing basic information about the individual candidates and the context of the selection procedure. These materials should include:

- The published advertisement for the position;
- The level of pay and its possible progress;
- The description of the job and duties;
- The specification of requirements and competences;
- The list of all applicants;
- The materials sent/submitted by individual candidates;
- The declaration of confidentiality and training;
- The form for recording the results of the selection procedure.

## Selection committee

Candidates for the position are evaluated by a selection committee whose composition is appointed by the person who decided to announce the selection procedure (Dean, Rector). Members of the committee are appointed on the basis of relevant qualifications, experience and competence. It is recommended that an odd number of persons be appointed for voting purposes when the selection committee is formed. If the interview is conducted in English, all members must be able to adequately participate in the interview. When the committee is appointed, one person is appointed to chair the committee and thus to manage the committee's proceeding. Both the members and the chairperson of the committee shall have direct and equal voting rights during the proceeding. The committee has a quorum if the chairperson and at least two other members are present.

In the composition of the selection committee, it is recommended to take into account the representation of women and men (the committee should be composed of representatives of both genders) and, where appropriate, other aspects that increase the diversity of the committee (e.g., academic positions, research profile). The UHK will regularly offer training on open and transparent admissions procedures and will develop a methodology for this purpose. Before the interview, the selection committee will carefully study the CVs of each candidate, in particular with regard to the required knowledge, skills and competences. The selection committee should meet at least 30 minutes before the first interview to discuss the details of the organisation of the interviews, their structure, the decision-making process and other key areas leading to a successful interview.

The evaluation of candidates also takes into account the fulfilment of the so-called third role of the university and experience in non-research activities. Mobility experience (including virtual) is evaluated positively. Career changes (interdisciplinary, intersectoral) are seen as career developments that have provided candidates with potentially valuable experience in developing their careers, skills and abilities. Career breaks are not a priori evaluated negatively; in the context of the development of the work-life balance area, the UHK also takes into account career breaks due to parenthood or caring for others in its career regulations or equality plan.

The committee will consider all candidates against the criteria set for the job and make a recommendation for the appointment/employment of the selected candidate. The committee should evaluate independently and objectively, in accordance with the principles of the UHK Code of Ethics.

## **3. Completion of the selection procedure**

### **3.1 Sending information on the completion of the selection procedure**

After the selection procedure is completed, a record of the results of the selection procedure should be completed for each of the candidates. This record must include objective reasons for not being successful in applying for the position. The reasons given must relate to the areas covered by the predefined qualifications and competences required for the post. The resulting minutes should contain information on the reasons why the candidate was not selected (e.g., which of the required qualifications and competences the individual candidates do not meet or meet partially/insufficiently, in which area preference was given to more experienced candidates). This material will also be used to provide feedback requested by unsuccessful candidates.

Candidates should be informed of the results of the selection procedure as soon as possible after the end of the selection procedure but usually no later than 30 calendar days from the date of the selection procedure.

The results of the selection procedure are communicated to the candidates by e-mail or by the contact means they have indicated (telephone contact, means of distance communication, etc.).

### **3.2 Providing feedback to unsuccessful candidates**

Feedback to unsuccessful applicants will be provided upon request from the applicants. The record of the selection procedure, duly completed by the selection committee, will be used for this purpose.

## **Dealing with documents**

All documents resulting from the selection procedure must be forwarded to the filing cabinet in accordance with the current Filing and Shredding Regulations.

## Annex 1 Schedule of selection procedure dates

Activity	Deadline
Publication of the selection procedure	30 calendar days before the closing date for applications (for non-academic, scientific and managerial positions, a minimum of 14 calendar days)
Call for supplementary materials	Supplementary materials sending within 3 calendar days of the call
Invitation to the selection procedure/interview	3 working days from the completion of the shortlist
E-mail informing of not acceptance for the next stage of the selection procedure	3 working days from the completion of the shortlist
Maximum time limit for invitation to the selection procedure/interview	5 working days before the interview
Results of selection procedures	No later than 30 calendar days from the date of the selection procedure