

Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment

HHU Overarching OTM-R Policy

Revised Version March 2024

I. Commitment

Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf (HHU) expresses its **full support for the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (Charter & Code)**. HHU is committed to pursue the implementation of both Charter & Code according to the process outlined by the **European Commission in the “Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)**.

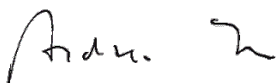
HHU already respects many aspects of the Charter & Code. By further endorsing these principles, HHU recognises the importance of realising an open and attractive European Research Area by contributing to the improvement of working and research conditions for researchers.

HHU also recognises the high importance of the principles and requirements of Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R) and is working towards their full implementation. This concerns the whole recruitment process for research staff from advertising positions and the application phase to the selection, evaluation as well as the appointment process.

The main principles are the following:

- a) clear and transparent information on the whole selection process, including selection criteria and an indicative timetable;
- b) clear and concise job advertisement with links to detailed information;
- c) ensuring that the levels of qualifications and competencies required are in line with the needs of the position;
- d) inclusion of explicit pro-active elements for underrepresented groups;
- e) keeping the administrative burden to a minimum;
- f) providing tools for common OTM-R compliant recruitment, as specified below;
- g) reviewing, where appropriate, the institutional policy on languages.

As a result of those efforts HHU is committed to refine its institutional strategy where necessary, to develop good practice and to raise awareness in order to give impetus for change. Overall, HHU aims at appointing and retaining the best staff for the university, enhancing the career and mobility of its research personnel and ensuring excellent working conditions.



Prof. Dr. Dr. Andrea Icks MBA
Vice President for Research and Transfer

II. Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment at HHU

The OTM-R principles form part of HHU's overall policy and are included in the "Hochschulentwicklungsplan 20.26" (HHU's Strategic Development Plan) as HHU's most important reference document. Furthermore, HHU has already issued a number of policies, regulations, guidelines and information documents for researchers and their employers. The university is committed to both frameworks on state or national level such as the "Vertrag über gute Beschäftigungsbedingungen für das Hochschulpersonal" (Framework Code on Good Employment Conditions for University Personnel) as well as site-specific measures. Those are complementary to an already strong legal framework in Germany, which sets out the basic conditions and requirements regarding the recruitment of researchers.

II.1. Scope

The recruitment of highly qualified scientific staff on all career levels is crucial for the success of every academic institution. It also forms a vital element of HHU's strategic efforts in order to strengthen its academic profile. This is why the OTM-R principles as well as the Charter and Code form the basis for the recruitment process of scientific staff. HHU executes the recruitment process of scientific staff in shared responsibility between the Rectorate, the central administration as well as its five faculties. In all recruitment procedures impartiality and independence can be considered as one of the most important aspects.

The OTM-R applies to the recruitment of all scientific personnel and is also highly relevant to all groups including to committee members and panels that are involved in the recruitment process.

This document applies to all phases of the recruitment process:

- Planning and application phase
 - Analysis of qualifications and competencies required for the position and requirements profile (preparation of job profile)
- Job advertisement and application phase
- Selection and evaluation phase
 - Structured selection procedures
 - Objective evaluation methods
- Appointment/recruitment phase

The recruitment process is adapted to the character and nature of the vacancy. Deviations in the procedure are clearly formulated, objectively justified and made transparent. Supplementary regulations for the recruitment are documented in further regulations and guidelines, which are made available on the HHU website.

II.2. Basic principles of personnel recruitment

The following section outlines measures that contribute to the implementation of the OTM-R principles at HHU.

II.2.1 Openness

Our personnel recruitment is based on the principle of equal opportunities and the recruitment processes are open to all interested candidates who meet the requirements profile regardless of their age, gender, ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability or sexual identity. This is ensured by involving representatives of the academic staff council as well as the equal opportunities officers and further representatives, such as the officer for staff with disabilities in all recruitment procedures. Among others, a special coordination unit for diversity issues (Heine-Center for Sustainable Development, HCSD) and the equal opportunities office are available for support, provide information material as well as guidelines, checklists and training.

Specifically, we implement this at HHU with the following measures:

- We advertise all positions externally and internally.
- We advertise all vacancies nationally. Most vacancies are also advertised internationally. All positions administrated by the central HR Department are published on EURAXESS.
- In our job advertisements, we deliberately invite applicants from underrepresented groups to apply and consider these appropriately in the selection process. This means that we explicitly include proactive elements for underrepresented groups.
- We work towards the simplification of administrative procedures for candidates, e.g. by the introduction of fully digitalised recruitment systems (“Application Portal” for professors, common e-recruiting tool and procedures for scientific staff).
- We enable video-based/web-based selection procedures in order to minimize international barriers such as geographical distance and different time zones whenever feasible.
- We continually expand the information such as guidelines and policies made available in English
- We ensure the accessibility of our websites and user interfaces (e.g. for people with disability).

II.2.2 Transparency

HHU emphasizes transparency in its recruitment procedures. Specifically, we implement the following measures:

- We publish clear, concise and quality-checked job advertisements that contain all relevant information (required skills, working hours, duration of employment if applicable, salary).
- We publish links to further or more detailed information (e.g. TV-L remuneration, W salary scale, recruitment requirements for professors).
- We provide transparent information on the application process and selection procedure on our website (flow chart overviews for recruitment procedure of professorships and staff, regulations on selection criteria, composition of committees etc.).

- We introduced digital tools (e.g. “Application Portal” for professors and a common e-recruiting tool for all staff) in order to ensure uniform standards.
- We strive for prompt communication with applicants and inform all applicants at the end of the selection process.
- We provide information about careers in general and HHU as an employer on our homepage and as part of the selection process.

II.2.3 Performance and Merit

The aim of HHU in the context of personnel recruitment is to attract, select and retain the most suitable employees for the university. Therefore, the entire personnel recruitment process is merit-based and takes required qualifications, optional competencies as well as individual performance into account.

Specifically, we implement this with the following measures:

- We carry out an analysis of the qualifications and competencies required to determine the job profile of the specific vacancy.
- The appointment of selection committees and the decision-making procedure for professorships are formulated in regulations and directives. For other recruitment procedures we have guidelines and checklists available on our website.
- For all vacant professorships, we carry out structured selection procedures based on skills and competencies.
- The selection process always takes into account disciplinary cultures and variations in career paths of applicants to prevent discriminatory or biased personnel decisions.

II.2.4 Quality

Ensuring the quality of personnel recruitment and continuously expanding it is important to us. Specifically, we implement this with the following measures:

- We offer a number of trainings in relevant topics for the recruitment process such as the electronic tools provided.
- We ensure a target-oriented exchange of information between those involved in the process.
- We offer support in formulating job requirements and during the selection process.
- We provide guidelines, templates and checklists for the recruitment process.
- In the recruitment process for professorships it is obligatory to involve external experts. This procedure is followed in most recruitments for doctoral and postdoctoral candidates as well.
- In order to optimise our procedures we regularly review the recruitment process and the selection tools we use.
- A complaint system is ensured by regulations in German law as well as by internal units, such as the academic staff council.

III. HHU policies, regulations and guidelines on OTM-R aspects as well as Charter & Code principles (selection)

I. General

[Hochschulentwicklungsplan 20.26](#) (HHU's Strategic Development Plan 20.26)

[Grundordnung der HHU](#) (Constitution of Heinrich Heine University, in German)

II. Ethical and Professional Aspects

[Scientific Integrity](#)

Good Scientific Practice Policy and Regulations

Policy and Regulation for Security-Relevant Research

[Literature and Further Information \(iGRAD\)](#)

[Research Data Management](#)

[Open Access Policy](#)

[Citizens' University](#)

III. Recruitment and Selection (cf. Social Security and Working Conditions)

[Regulation on the Appointment of Professors](#) (in German, Berufungsordnung)

[Regulations for the Evaluation of Junior Professors with and without Tenure Track](#) (in German, Ordnung für die Evaluation von Juniorprofessuren mit und ohne Tenure Track)

[Equal Opportunities Policy](#)

[Heine-Center for Sustainable Development \(HCSD\) – Section Diversity](#)

IV. Working Conditions and Social Security (cf. Recruitment and Selection)

[Framework Code on Good Employment Conditions for University Personnel](#)
(Vertrag über gute Beschäftigungsbedingungen für das Hochschulpersonal)

[Junior Scientist and International Researcher Center JUNO](#) (information and guidelines for international researchers)

[Data Protection Unit](#)

[Health and Safety](#)

Staff Councils

[Academic staff](#)

[Administrative staff](#)

[University Hospital staff](#)

V. Training and Development

[Research Support Services](#) (Research and Transfer Department)

[ProFil - Professionalisation, advanced training and interdisciplinary learning](#)
(HHU's comprehensive web portal for career development and further training)

[Heine Research Academies \(HeRA\)](#)

[Service-Center for Good Teaching and Learning SeLL](#)

Some documents are available in German only and/or only on the HHU intranet.

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